NOVEMBER 1955

COMMENTARY

EARLHAM COLLEGE
LIBRARY
RICHMOND, IND.

Morocco's Jews Between Islam and France — HAL LEHRMAN
Jew and Gentile in the New South — HARRY L. GOLDEN
Bonn Joins the Co-Existence Game — HERBERT LUETHY
Selling the President to the People — DANIEL J. BOORSTIN
The Others—A Story — ALFRED MEMMI
Soviet Expansion into the Middle East — GEORGE LICHTHEIM
Congress's Right to Investigate — PAUL R. HAYS
Zealots of Yearning—A Poem — DAVID ROKEAH
Jewish First Names Through the Ages — BENZION C. KAGANOFF
From the American Scene
The Uptown Social Club — THEODORE FRANKEL
Cedars of Lebanon
Argument for the Immortal Soul
On the Horizon
Anne Frank on Broadway — ALGENE BALLIF
The Study of Man
More Light from Judean Caves — H. L. GINSBERG

BOOKS IN REVIEW

David Bernstein — Arthur Mann — Gerson D. Cohen
Nahum N. Glatzer — Gerald Weales — Isaac Rosenfeld

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

50c

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Keep your baby "Socially Acceptable" in Playtex® baby pants!

TRADE MARK

MORE MOTHERS BUY PLAYTEX THAN ANY OTHER BRAND

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMENTARY

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, *the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. Its pages will be hospitable to diverse points of view and belief, and it hopes to encourage original creative endeavor in the various fields of culture.*

The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY'S *contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of* COMMENTARY *by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.*

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

IRVING M. ENGEL, *President*

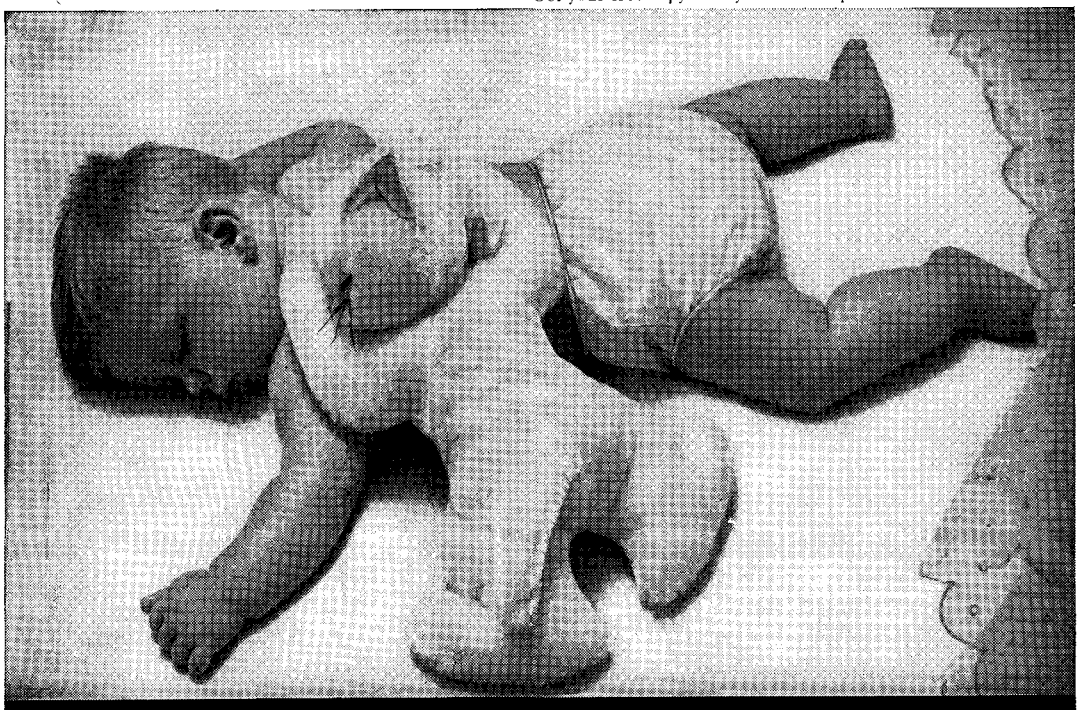
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

℞ For mothers— from Kleinert's

A warmly understanding booklet on sleep patterns and problems of infant and child . . . prepared especially for Kleinert's by the CHILD STUDY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA. With an introduction by the distinguished medical consultant to Kleinert's,

J. R. MOTE, M.D.

Get your free copy at any Infant's department or store.



Doctor-approved Softex Pants are better for baby...asleep or awake!

• They actually help *prevent* diaper rash, chafing, chapping, urine burn. • Can't overheat baby like ordinary pants; Softex is wetproofed *without* rubber. • Lightest weight of all leading brands tested; they weigh less than an ounce. • They cannot bind baby anywhere. • So safe! Acid-proof, allergy-free. • Won't crack, peel or stiffen; they're washing-machine-washable with mild soap flakes or powder. • Kleinert's Softex Pants in white and baby colors, $1.00. All sizes. (Baby is sleeping on Kleinert's Dry-Downe flannel-covered Rubber Sheet. White or pastels, crib to carriage sizes, 75¢ to $3.50.)

COMMENDED BY THE CONSUMER SERVICE BUREAU OF PARENTS' MAGAZINE

K® Kleinert's

SOFTEX BABY PANTS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMENTARY

November 1955 VOLUME 20, NUMBER 5

Morocco's Jews Between Islam and France	*Hal Lehrman*	393
Jew and Gentile in the New South	*Harry L. Golden*	403
Bonn Joins the Co-Existence Game	*Herbert Luethy*	413
Selling the President to the People	*Daniel J. Boorstin*	421
The Others *A Story*	*Alfred Memmi*	428
Soviet Expansion into the Middle East	*George Lichtheim*	435
Congress's Right to Investigate	*Paul R. Hays*	440
Jewish First Names Through the Ages	*Benzion C. Kaganoff*	447
From the American Scene The Uptown Social Club	*Theodore Frankel*	453
Cedars of Lebanon Argument for the Immortal Soul		
On the Horizon Anne Frank on Broadway	*Algene Ballif*	464
Zealots of Yearning *A Poem*	*David Rokeah*	467
The Study of Man More Light from Judean Caves	*H. L. Ginsberg*	468
Letters from Readers		475
Books in Review		479
American Jewish Year Book, 1955	*David Bernstein*	479
The Nazarene Gospel Restored, by Robert Graves and Joshua Podro	*Gerson D. Cohen*	482
Susan B. Anthony: Her Personal History and Her Era, by Katherine Anthony	*Arthur Mann*	485
The Responsa Literature, by Solomon B. Freehof	*Nahum N. Glatzer*	486
The Dignity of Man, by Russell W. Davenport	*Gerald Weales*	488
The Late Risers, by Bernard Wolfe	*Isaac Rosenfeld*	490

Managing Editor MARTIN GREENBERG

Editor ELLIOT E. COHEN

Business Manager FRANCES GREEN

Associate Editor CLEMENT GREENBERG

Assistant Editor SHERRY ABEL

Advertising DOROTHY PUTNEY

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

DAVID SHER, *Chairman*

CHARLES D. BREITEL, ALBERT FURTH, MAURICE GLINERT, RALPH K. GUINZBERG, HENRY JAFFE, SYDNEY M. KAYE, EDWARD KUHN, JR., ANNE W. LANGMAN, LOUIS M. RABINOWITZ, MARIE L. ROTHSCHILD, ALAN M. STROOCK, JACK D. TARCHER, BEN TOUSTER, MILTON WEILL

COMMENTARY, incorporating *Contemporary Jewish Record:* Published monthly by the American Jewish Committee, 50¢ a copy; $6.00 a year; 2 years, $10.00; 3 years, $14.00. No additional charge for Canadian or foreign postage. Offices, 34 West 33rd Street, New York 1. Re-entered as second class matter October 30, 1945 at the post office in New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Copyright 1955 by the American Jewish Committee. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved by the publisher in the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, and all countries participating in the International Copyright Convention and the Pan-American Copyright Convention. Indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Magazine Subject Index, and Public Affairs Information Service.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

Heirs of the Pharisees *Jakob J. Petuchowski*

The recent rehabilitation of the reputation of the Pharisees, principally achieved by Christian scholars, should not lead us – this Reform rabbi writes – to invoke their example blindly or imitate them slavishly in defining what genuine Jewishness must be under modern conditions.

What Is the Iron Curtain For? *G. F. Hudson*

The British political analyst and historian discusses the uses and functions of the "Chinese Wall" behind which the Soviet world has chosen to conceal its inner workings from the rest of the planet, and tries to determine to what extent that wall has been breeched lately.

Discrimination in Housing *Charles Abrams*

The way to enlightened housing has been considerably cleared in recent years, but many blocks and obstacles remain: economic as well as racial prejudices, fallacies, illusions – all of which limit the individual's freedom to choose his place of dwelling and to insist on a fair deal in what he pays for it. The New York State Rent Administrator discusses this problem under its many aspects.

The Kastner Case *W. Z. Laqueur*

An Israeli writer brings us up to date on the Kastner case, which has held the attention of all Israel over the past year, and reminded many Jews that we have not yet finished coming to terms with the most terrible chapter in Jewish history.

Philip Phillips: Another Ante-Bellum Dignitary of the South

The autobiographical memoir of a man termed by many the outstanding Jew of the ante-bellum South. A lawyer, statesman, and something of a soldier too, Phillips, who started life in the Deep South and remained a Southerner to the end, rose to be one of the 19th century's leading lawyers in Supreme Court practice in Washington.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMENTARY

MOROCCO'S JEWS BETWEEN ISLAM AND FRANCE

How Good Are Nationalist Pledges of Equal Rights?

HAL LEHRMAN

ALGIERS

IN THE lexicon of troubled Morocco, there is no such phrase as "an easy solution"—neither to the problem of Moroccan nationalism, as witness the frantic efforts of the French government to hit upon a political arrangement acceptable to both the native Moroccans and the resident French, nor to the smaller but anguishing problem of Moroccan Jewry. A resolution of the Jewish dilemma might appear a simple enough matter to observers thousands of miles away. It does not appear so to observers on the spot.

The difficulties that mock any simple solution of the Moroccan Jewish crisis face one on every side in this troubled country. Thus:

—An Arab killed a Jewish shopkeeper in Sefrou for selling cigarettes, which, because their distribution is a lucrative French monopoly, the nationalists were boycotting. The victim's widow told this writer she wanted to go to Israel. She has three small children, and no means of support. Should Israel, already overburdened with non-productive immigrants, take her anyway—and others like her?

—A Jewish notable in Fez explained: "I wish I could leave. But this is where I was born. The Moslems have not been molesting the Jews in Fez. Yes, I am uneasy. But all my life I have been working for the future, and my children's future. I have a good business. I have property. If I tried to sell it, I would get almost nothing in return. The Jews are not buying. The Arabs are not buying. Maybe they think they will get it cheaper if they wait. Should I leave everything and run? What kind of future would my family have, penniless in a new land? Before I give up everything, I must first be very sure there is no other way."

—In the old Portuguese-built town of Mazagan, on the fateful weekend of August 20, 1955, the homes of twenty-six Jewish families were looted and burned by Arab rioters. No Jews were killed; the two thousand living in the exposed area had been evacuated in time. When a representative of the American Joint Distribution Committee arrived from Casablanca with a truckload of milk, butter, cheese, sugar, olive oil, and blankets, he asked them what else they needed. "A ship to Israel!" they cried. A Casablanca newspaper, claiming to have interviewed the president of the Mazagan community, quoted him as clamoring for rescue. But the president immediately denied it. Other

---

THE plight of the Jewries of North Africa, and particularly of Morocco's at this moment of nationalist turmoil, continues to engross the anxious attention of Jews everywhere. This report was written on the spot and should both trouble and reassure us. HAL LEHRMAN needs no introduction to readers of this magazine. Today one of the most authoritative of writers on Middle Eastern and Jewish affairs, he first made his reputation as a foreign correspondent in Central and Eastern Europe. His last appearance in COMMENTARY was in April, with "Two Middle East Conferences in Washington." Mr. Lehrman is also a lecturer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mazagan leaders likewise disclaimed any such sentiments.

—At Oued Zem, where over two-score Europeans and three Jews were slaughtered on August 20, a young Jewish couple, married a few weeks earlier, showed me the charred interior of their humble stone house—the floor covered with blackened debris, the kitchen pots misshapen by fire, the bedsprings crazily uncoiled, not a thing left straight or whole. "We wanted to be married in Israel," the boy said. "But the Israeli immigration office said we should have to leave our parents behind. So we stayed—for this."

—In Casablanca one responsible spokesman of the Istiqlal party assured me, with every sign of sincerity: "In the new Morocco to which we aspire, the Jews shall be cherished as among the most valuable of our citizens. They will have no cause at all to emigrate. No distinction will be drawn between them and other Moroccans. If I were not sure of this, I would emigrate myself." But in Tetuan I dined with a nationalist dignitary who displayed more traditional attitudes. "The Jews have not helped us in our struggle," he declared, three fingers of his right hand prodding the huge carcass of roast sheep before us. "Thousands of Moslems have suffered in French jails, but not a single Jew. When we form our first government, there will be no place in it for Jews. Perhaps later, when they have given some proof that they are good Moroccans, there may be posts for them."

—The Jewish leaders' estimates of the future ran the gamut from pessimism through caution to hope. Said one: "The only solution is total emigration, and as fast as can be managed. I myself am already taking steps to settle in France." Said another: "Who can say that the Moslems will keep their promises? But who can say, either, that Israel can accept a quarter-million of us, or that all of us will want to leave? We must therefore seek an accommodation with Moslem nationalism. It is a calculated risk." Said a third: "There is an element, and a strong one, in the nationalist movement that is determined to establish Morocco on strong democratic foundations. Our official spokesmen have persistently behaved as if this element did not exist. It is late now, but not too late to change. If we Jews want a free Morocco in which to live and prosper—and most of us do—then we must begin working with the Moslems to make it a reality."

IN THE confusing welter of Moroccan opinion, there are nevertheless a few sure facts to hold on to—facts that emerged from an intensive 45-day tour of North Africa which took this correspondent from the international city of Tangier into Spanish Morocco and thence across the French zone all the way from holy Fez in the far north to sun-baked Marrakech in the middle south. The time of these travels—from late July to early September—saw the rise and fall of Resident General Gilbert Grandval, the bloody August risings in the Arab towns and the descent of the Berber tribesmen from the Atlas Mountains, the reinforcement of the French forces, and the surrender to the French of the revolting tribes. Now to the facts.

In their present stage of development the Moroccan nationalist parties cannot guarantee the safety of any exposed minority when a Moslem mob goes on the rampage. The nationalists are able to impose a measure of discipline on their followers in the large urban centers, considerably less in the *bled* or hinterland plains—and very little in the remote mountain towns. Until the Moroccan populace learns self-control, therefore, or nationalist exhortation grows as effective in restraint of rioting as it already is in provocation, Jews will remain in danger. The French are able to punish native arsonists and killers if they catch them, but aren't always able to stop them beforehand. The country is too big, eight million Moslems too many, and the French garrison spread too thin.

In the recent outbreaks, Jews as Jews were not singled out for attack. The European population suffered much heavier losses. Jews and Jewish property were attacked along with everything else that was non-Moslem, or Jews were mistaken for Europeans. But this is admittedly small consolation. A Moroccan mob running amuck is waging holy war—a *jihad* against *all* infidels. Even where the riots have a political character, and are consciously aimed at the "colonial oppressor," woe to the Jew or any other "infidel" who accidentally gets in the way. Nationalist political theoreticians may insist on the Moroccan nationality of the Jew, but Moslems on the rampage are not in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clined to pay such opinions any heed. And when the mob kills, it does so with a complicated savagery that makes an ordinary dispatching at one blow seem the height of mercy.

Israel has raised its North African immigration quota for the coming year from 30,000 to 45,000. If Israel were willing and able to have them, she could get twice that number of immigrants from Morocco alone in the next twelve months.

But not because the Jews are afraid to remain. They *are* afraid, of course; the fear is endemic, brooding over every *mellah* and Jewish home in Morocco like a miasma. Yet those who clamber aboard the ships bound for Israel seek not a refuge—even after the August atrocities—but a place to work. The Jewish emigration from Morocco remains—even as it remained after the Petitjean massacre in 1954—a flight from poverty and unemployment, an *economic* flight.

The economic character of Moroccan Jewish emigration is clear from the invariable answer one gets from emigrants as to their reasons for leaving: "To earn our bread." It is proved beyond a doubt by the fact that only a tiny fraction of those Moroccan Jews possessing any property (except for pious elderly people seeking to end their days in the Holy Land) have joined the exodus. The overwhelming bulk of the emigrants, and of the applicants for emigration, consists of the poverty-stricken. (In the first migration wave after Israel's founding, when immigrants found conditions in the new state difficult, a certain number of Jews returned to Morocco.) The poverty-stricken make up the majority of Moroccan Jewry. Never at any time did they know more than a hand-to-mouth existence, but their distress in the past two years has been sharpened intolerably by the deadly effect of political unrest on the Moroccan economy in general and on Jewish trade and crafts in particular. They go to Israel to escape killing poverty, not pogroms. Those who do not live in misery stay in Morocco, even though they are no less menaced than poor Jews.

Nobody thinks the *entire* Moroccan Jewish community can be snatched up and set down elsewhere. There is, first of all, the natural reluctance of many people to emigrate from the land of their birth. There is the limit on the number of immigrants Israel can be expected to receive. And there is the high birth-rate among those who remain. In short, it is felt that a Jewish community of no inconsiderable size will continue to dwell in Morocco, regardless of what policy Israel in the end decides to pursue.

THE more alert Moroccan nationalists, though confident the future is theirs, do not wish to jeopardize it by misunderstandings with the Jews. They have a healthy, even exaggerated, respect for the influence of world (especially American) Jewry. They also genuinely admire Moroccan Jewry's talents and abilities. They know that any autonomous Morocco of tomorrow will sorely need Jewish commercial, financial, medical, technical, and administrative talent. They want to assure themselves the friendship, if not the active assistance, of the United States. Finally, the French-trained elite among the Moroccan nationalists do earnestly desire to build a democratic, constitutional, secular society, and have given repeated assurances in recent weeks that Jewish-Moslem equality in a reformed Moroccan state is their fixed goal.

The ineluctable march of events toward Moroccan "home rule" has meanwhile compelled an abrupt shift in the Moroccan Jewish position. More and more, the view is gaining ground that Jewish insistence on French guarantees of Moroccan Jewish rights is more dangerous than prudent. Such guarantees would seem to imply that the Jews possessed a special status and would tend to set them apart from the majority of the population—the very thing they have complained about in the past. Even if the guarantees were effective at the beginning, eventually the Moroccan state would grow strong enough to re-negotiate or write them out of existence, it is feared, and a legacy of Moslem resentment would be the only result.

Would it not be more statesmanlike instead, many have asked, to work right now for *Moslem* guarantees of the rights and liberties of *all*? And since such guarantees would be meaningless outside the context of a free society, would not the most practicable way to insure their implementation be to try and make Morocco into such a free society? Which is rather like what the nationalists have been saying.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the past the official Moroccan Jewish community necessarily followed a public course of strict neutrality as between France and Islam, all the while hoping it would never have to face the problem of living alone with the Moslem majority. But the recent developments have weakened this hope considerably. The march of events has thus shifted the basis of the Jewish position considerably over toward the nationalist side.

THE Jewish victims of the rioting on the weekend of August 20—four dead, four seriously wounded, over one hundred homes and shops pillaged or gutted—were a source of acute embarrassment to some of the nationalist leaders. Especially so, as only five days earlier, on August 15 in New York, the exiled Secretary General of the Istiqlal party, Ahmed Balafrej, had scouted any fear that "in an independent Morocco the Jews would suffer discrimination in any form."

Indeed, only one incident in the whole troubled summer of this bloody Moroccan year can clearly be regarded as constituting a deliberate attack on Jews. In the anti-Moslem outbreaks following the Bastille Day explosion of a bomb among Europeans outside a crowded Casablanca café, a number of people were injured by the security forces as they fought to hold the French mob in check. The names of the hospitalized rioters were published—with malicious prominence, many thought—in the local press. A considerable number of them were Jewish. Soon after, Moslems started to attack Jewish shops and assault Jews in the streets of the native quarter—but this *riposte* to Jewish "provocation" ended almost as soon as it had begun.

August 20, the second anniversary of pro-nationalist Sultan Sidi Mohammed ben Moulay Yussef's dethronement, was an ominous date. Mob feeling boiled up on that day in the smaller hinterland towns rather than in the larger cities, which remained relatively calm. The atrocities committed on isolated communities of European civilians undoubtedly shocked even the nationalists. No attempt was made to condone them (though privately the Istiqlalists muttered that French military brutality and provocations by "colonialists" had goaded on the mobs). But in none of the many conversations I had with Moslem leaders was there anything but regret for the fact that Jews, too, had suffered.

In Oued Zem, Khenifra, and Khouribga (where some seventy European men, women, and children were slaughtered, along with three Jews), the Jewish homes attacked by the rioters lay adjacent to and were indistinguishable from the European homes. In Ouezzane, Boujad, Safi, and Mazagan, the Jewish homes lay next to Moslem, not European, ones. At first, it was reported that the mob had deliberately spared European property and singled out only Jewish-owned houses in a number of these places. But, say nationalist apologists, it was because there were no European targets in the native quarters of these towns that the Jews were attacked, and out of a desire to strike against non-Moslems in general rather than against Jews in particular. And they point to the fact that in some instances Jews were hidden by their Moslem neighbors or given Arab cloaks in which to disguise themselves.

But it is obvious that even when only occasional Moslem forays against non-believers in general are likely, Moroccan Jews must feel fearful. These fears are scarcely allayed by the fact that in Mazagan, moderate nationalists tried in advance to head off any move against Jews. For some days preceding August 20, leaflets were distributed to Jewish merchants warning them to close their shops on that date as a sign of solidarity with their Moslem "compatriots." (Since the anniversary came on a Saturday, the shops were closed in any case.) Jewish leaders, moreover, were privately assured that no harm would befall their community. Yet the very first house attacked was Jewish; a summer hostel for Jewish girls, easily identifiable as an Alliance Israélite school, was nearly taken by assault; twenty-four other Jewish properties were pillaged. There will have to be a great deal of educational work done among Islam's Moroccan faithful before their Jewish neighbors can accept nationalist pledges of Jewish security.

LONG before the August outbreaks, the number of registrations for emigration to Israel had been substantially ahead of the available quota. In the previous twelve months, about 24,000 Moroccan Jewish emigrants had gone to Israel. "If we had the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

means, and if Israel were willing," a competent source advised me, "we could take 50,000 in one month. Right now there are 20,000 just in Casablanca who want to go."

Though reduced since Petitjean, Israel's standards of eligibility were still barring many emigrants when I left Morocco in September. Apart from candidates medically disqualified, others were being rejected as potential public charges. The rule of thumb seemed to be: for every four or five dependents there had to be one able-bodied wage-earner—usually the father of a family. If the family was larger (North African Jewry is notably prolific), then it might have to find another adult of working age to justify the additional dependents, or prove that an older child was capable of working. In practice, this rule often resulted in the rejection of elderly parents, widows with minor children, and the like.

In Marrakech, whither the entire population of several exposed mountain Jewish villages was evacuated for processing, the Jewish Agency's methods of selection (which are quite justifiable in the light of the situation of Israel's economy) caused a near crisis. Outraged by the exclusion of a number of grandparents and others, Jewish mountaineers actually came bearing sheep and other gifts to the Pasha—the well-known El Glawi—to plead for his help against the Jewish officials!

Because of the excess of emigrant supply over available places, registration was carefully controlled. In Casablanca, applicants were being interviewed only twice weekly. Elsewhere hearings were held only when an Aliyah commission from Casablanca visited the main town of the region, which was about once a month.

This hold-down had a number of purposes. It helped to avoid a situation in which a large number of accepted applicants would close their shops or quit their employment, and then have to undergo months of demoralizing idleness while awaiting their turn. It also eliminated long lines outside registration offices that might attract unfavorable Arab attention. As a further precaution, each selection of emigrants took in all parts of Morocco, rather than concentrating on one locality at a time. The reception camp in Casablanca, where emigrants received their vaccinations and final medical processing, lay several miles outside the city, and care was taken not to overcrowd it.

Israel's limited capacity to absorb immigrants has not been the only brake on immigration. True, it has been desirable to keep the migration within the bounds of the Israeli "ship-to-settlement" program, with every newcomer going directly to a new and fairly permanent residence; no one wants to have to start up the uneconomic transient work-camps (*ma'abarot*) again. But it has also been considered necessary to avoid irritating French and Moslem susceptibilities.

The issue is largely academic now, after the cataclysmic events of the summer—but back in the spring of this year, anxiety was apparent in official French circles over the "high" rate of emigration even at that time. They may have feared that French prestige would suffer from a large-scale flight of people apparently unwilling to trust their lives to French protection. They may also have feared that a large Jewish exodus might provoke a similar one by French settlers. Several months later, when I queried French officials in Rabat, they insisted the sole reason had been fear of the Moslems taking offense (and worse) if too many Jews left. But the French alarm was allayed, and by tacit understanding the Jewish Agency continued to send people on an average of 2,000 per month.

The August riots, however, forced a drastic revision of this figure; it now appears that it is to be boosted to around 5,000 for November, 5,000 for December, and 3,500 per month thereafter. So great an increase six months ago might have caused an outcry among the French. But now too much has happened. After Oued Zem, with its frightful toll of French civilian dead—and the present upheaval in Moroccan-French relations—there is little likelihood that harassed Rabat will waste much thought on Jewish emigration. Nor is serious trouble, at this juncture, anticipated from the Moslem side.

Not that the nationalists are glad to see the Jews go, or ever have been. The attitude here of ex-Pasha Si Bekkai of Sefrou—the most influential leader of Moroccan nationalism and the movement's representative in the all-important Throne Council—is significant. The ex-Pasha is reliably re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ported to have advised Moroccan Jewish circles that, while the new Morocco would certainly respect the inalienable right of its Jewish or other citizens to freedom of movement, that same freedom of movement for citizens' *assets* seemed to him to be another matter altogether. (One recalls the exodus of the Jews of Iraq, when Jewish property—ranging from bank accounts and villas to wedding rings and cooking utensils—were systematically confiscated and their owners loaded penniless on outgoing airplanes.)

"There is nothing undemocratic about laws against the indiscriminate export of currency," said another nationalist chief. "They would apply in our case to Moslems and Christians as well as Jews. There would be nothing anti-Jewish about it. All democratic countries have such laws." I ventured to suggest that the United States did not. "Ah," he countered, "but many other countries do." Would the future Morocco legislate against the export of assets? "Maybe, and maybe not. Wouldn't it be undemocratic to say in advance what a democratic government is going to decide. . . ?" Your coyness, I thought to myself, is an excellent argument for those who advocate that Moroccan Jews get out while the going is still good.

But the problem of emigrant property is not really a paramount one. Most emigrants, alas, have no assets to impound. If Morocco becomes a state in which the Jews cannot live in dignity, the matter of Jewish property will be only a minor trouble. The really crucial issue is: will the Jews have equality and freedom along with all other Moroccans? About this, as we have seen, the nationalists at the moment are gratifyingly explicit.

The commitments were long overdue. As a matter of fact, in point of law, Jews are still second-class citizens, just as they were under the reign of Mohammed ben Yussef, the champion of the nationalist cause, and for centuries before him. Indeed, they are not citizens at all, but subjects, and inferior subjects at that.

Dimmi is the term for them: "protected ones," special wards of the Sultan. The Jewish community enjoys certain autonomous rights—it may levy taxes on its members and institute rabbinical tribunals—but in a country whree the Sultan is both priest and king, and the Moslem religious community is virtually identical with the political state, the position of the Jewish community is necessarily subordinate and inferior. No Jew occupies any position of consequence in the Moroccan civil service, to say nothing of the Sherifian government, which ostensibly administers the Protectorate. Islam is the Sultan's guide. Under such a dispensation, Jews manifestly can at best enjoy toleration, never equality. The presence of the French since 1912 has enabled them to increase tremendously their relative culture, stature, and security. But theoretically they can still be hauled before a Moslem judge (*cadi*) on grounds of having profaned the faith. They are at the mercy of this same *cadi* in any litigation with a Moslem, and of Moslem administrators (pasha or *cadi*) in their relations with the state.

TOWARD earlier blandishments by the nationalists, who were seeking their cooperation in the struggle against the French, the Jews understandably turned a hesitant ear. How could the nationalists expect an open Jewish stand against France, which was the protector of Morocco by treaty right and its master in fact, the guardian of Jewish liberties, their only bulwark against medieval rule and mass violence? How could Jewry accept private assurances that Jews were Moroccans like everyone else when the existing laws proved the contrary and the nationalists refrained from public pledges of anything better?

The first significant effort to dispel these misgivings was made last November by Si Bekkai himself in the pages of *Evidences*, the French magazine published in Paris by the American Jewish Committee. He dismissed as absurd any thought that Jews were regarded with anything but benevolence by their Moslem compatriots. He accused the French of a policy of *divide et impera*; they had tried to set Moslem against Jew, he charged, by granting the latter elementary rights such as freedom of association while withholding them from the former. But Moroccans had fathomed this ruse and declined to turn against Jewry. Si Bekkai proved by parchments that even in the Middle Ages the sultans had been tireless protectors of the Sons of Abraham. He noted, with particular effect, that during the war Mohammed ben Yussef had resisted Vichy

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pressure to introduce a North African equivalent of the Nuremberg Laws, courageously affirming the "inviolability of Moroccan citizenship" against pro-Nazi attempts to separate Jewish from other Moroccans. (To Islam's credit, it should be recalled that in Algeria—an integral part of metropolitan France, where Marshal Pétain, not a native potentate, was the legal sovereign—Vichy *did* strip Jews of their French citizenship.)

Si Bekkai's effort was gratifying but inadequate. He had failed to see the point. This was glaringly evident in his defense of Ben Yussef's attitude during the Israeli-Arab war. The monarch, in a proclamation "to our generous people," had sturdily associated himself with the purposes of the Arab League armies in "penetrating Holy Palestine's territory to defend its inhabitants and repel the unjustified Zionist aggression." But he had reminded Moslems that the "Moroccan Jews, established for centuries in this country which has protected them . . . are different from the uprooted Jews from all corners of the earth who . . . wish to seize Palestine unjustly and arbitrarily." He had cautioned his Jewish subjects at the same time "not to forget that they are Moroccans living under Our aegis, and that they have always found in Us the best defender of their interests and rights." Therefore, he had added, "they should abstain from any act that would assist the Zionist aggression or indicate solidarity with it—for they would thereby prejudice their own special rights as well as their Moroccan nationality. . . ."

For Si Bekkai this declaration, in all its parts, demonstrated the Sultan's "very high level of thought." He seemed oblivious to its feudal tone, its note of threat, its confirmation of the fact that Moroccan Jewry held its "special rights" only by the Sultan's favor, who could revoke them at his pleasure.

Clearly, the nationalists would have to do better than this to dispel Jewish apprehensions. Si Bekkai tried again in the Paris weekly *Express*. (This article, though it appeared in mid-October, was actually written after the one published in *Evidences*.) Assuming that the French would have to settle with Ben Yussef, the ex-Pasha saw the following as the fruits of a successful settlement: "A real democracy will be established assuring to all Moroccans the enjoyment and exercise of all political, economic, and social rights. It is self-evident that our Jewish compatriots will enjoy the same rights and have the same obligations [as other Moroccans]. . . ." But it was not "self-evident" at all—if Ben Yussef were restored to all the absoluteness of his previous power, Jewish rights and freedoms would hang by the thin thread of his favor.

Two developments in the French-Moroccan debate pushed nationalist thinking further. For one thing, despite the nationalist movement's continued illegality and increasing resort to terrorism, it appeared that the French government was giving serious thought to the aspirations of the outlawed Moroccan political parties. If Moroccan nationalism was now being treated seriously, it had itself to behave with more seriousness. Vague phrases were no longer enough—it needed to produce a program. For another thing, the nationalists perceived that the French, seemingly prepared to yield much, were not prepared to tolerate the ex-Sultan's return to power, certainly not at once and perhaps never. There might be a Regency Council, a Throne Council, a Provisional Government, an accelerated entry of Moroccans into the administration—but no Ben Yussef, no sovereign Morocco ruled by an absolute monarch who might graciously concede his subjects certain rights if they behaved themselves.

Even Ben Yussef began to show that he was aware at least of the idea of a constitutional monarchy. This idea took deeper root in the nationalists' mind and was increasingly developed in their declarations. This was especially significant from the Jewish point of view because constitutionalism implied a *secular* state in which the monarch's role as religious head would be divorced from his lay function as head of the state. In such a state the religious affiliations of its citizens would be entirely irrelevant; the "Jewishness" of any particular Moroccan would cease to have any civil interest or consequence.

Expressive of the best nationalist intentions, I believe, was a declaration to a French news agency on September 2 by Abdeljalif Bouabid, an important member of the Istiqlal delegation that had met with the French government at Aix-les-Bains. Discussing the throne question, he declared:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"We think it is up to the Moroccan people to express themselves freely and democratically on this problem during the transitional period of the Regency Council. . . . It is necessary to undertake *a whole ensemble of structural reforms*, with a view to endowing Morocco, both locally and nationally, with representative, democratic institutions —in a word, to give Morocco a regime of constitutional monarchy."

It is not generally known that the nationalists have assigned a group of notables the special function of promoting Moslem-Jewish relations inside Morocco. I learned of this group's existence from no less a personage than Mohammed Lyazidi, Istiqlal's acting Secretary General. And a lengthy private conversation with a leader of this group, in his half-Moorish, half-European villa, fully demonstrated that he, for one, knew at least how to speak in the Western idiom and had thought his way through the Jewish problem. The following excerpts from my notes give the essentials of his position:

"It is unfortunately true that, because the Sultan was a religious chief, no non-Moslems could participate officially in the Moroccan government. In times past Jews were consultants and high advisors; they could not be administrators. . . . The French exploited this point skillfully. They stressed to the Jews that, under the Moroccan religio-political system, Jews could never be more than a tolerated minority. . . . Every time we extended the hand of friendship to the Jews, the French warned them: 'If we leave, the Moslems will cut your throats.' (I interposed to say that the Jews believed this without the French warnings, if such warnings had ever been given.) Now we are going to eliminate all possibility of such pressure. Once we get rid of the Protectorate, we are determined to build a secular, democratic society. Our chief of state will be like the Queen of England: he will reign but not rule. . . .

"I give you my word of honor that we fully appreciate the merits of our Jewish compatriots. . . . Jews have a genius for adaptation. The size and ratio of their elite —doctors, lawyers, professionals of all kinds— is phenomenal. This is a tremendous asset for us. Why should we abandon it? (Here he leaned forward and tapped my knee significantly.) I tell you further that the Moroccan people earnestly desire to strengthen their ties with America. The bond that will unite us with America is our Jewish compatriots. . . ."

EVEN in this Moroccan liberal, however, there were disturbing flashes of rancor. When he spoke of certain Jewish leaders as "puppets" of the French, his voice rose and his face turned brick-red. "We know everything they have done," he cried. "There is not a report written, a request presented, a document delivered anywhere in Morocco that we do not have in our hands within a short time!" If a sober nationalist can sound that truculent, Jewish circles may be forgiven for feeling uneasy about his less moderate associates.

There are other tormenting thoughts. How representative are the liberal views expressed above? Do they echo the *dominant* nationalist opinion? There is a chance they do. But they can scarcely echo the sentiments of the Moroccan populace at large, whose only clear conviction at the moment is a peculiar passion for their "martyred" ex-Sultan. Can their leaders raise them up to the level of responsibility of a free people? Indeed, *do* the nationalists of Morocco lead their people? Do the people have *any* leaders who really represent them? No vote has ever been taken in Morocco, a country traditionally split between lowland and mountain, Arab and Berber, barbarous rival tribes and ambitious feudal families. Nobody really knows. Conceivably, should the French turn over enough authority to the nationalists, Morocco might find itself not a peaceful constitutional state, but in the throes of anarchy.

BETWEEN France on one side and Moroccan nationalism on the other, Moroccan Jewry had traditionally observed the strictest neutrality in public and offered fervent prayers in private for the country's continuing in French hands. Would not the departure of the French mean the return of ancient indignities? This did not mean one was opposed to the much needed economic and social reforms in favor of the Moroccans which it was hoped the French had sufficient flexibility to institute. But abandonment of Morocco by the French—that would make the future unthinkable.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The institution by Mendès-France of his new policy in mid-1954 opened a fresh period. In Tunisia home rule was indicated, in Morocco something less, but with home rule as the ultimate goal. In the opinion of the official Jewish leadership, the community's security now called for guarantees—French and Moroccan, but primarily French—that all non-Moslem minorities, Jewish *and* European, would be protected in all their human rights under any future grant of autonomy to the Moslem majority. According to Moslem reports, and reports from Jewish sources critical of the community leadership, this position eventually crystallized into the following concrete demands: a special status for Jews; political representation of the Jewish community as a bloc in any Moroccan parliament and other government bodies; a French guarantee for twenty or thirty years; then, if Morocco became a self-governing state, the option of complete Moroccan nationality, or foreign nationality without leaving Morocco, or emigration with all property.

From the strictly Jewish viewpoint, in view of the obvious hazards of unrestrained Moroccan statehood, these reported terms are quite defensible. (Though never publicly confirmed, to the best of my knowledge, they seem to have more or less reflected at least the spirit of official Jewish hopes at the time.) But to the nationalists, who claim to possess confidential Jewish memoranda submitted to the Resident General embodying these terms, such demands were an intolerable affront to the whole idea of self-determination. How, they asked, could any state accept the presence within its borders of an alien group enjoying all rights and representations without any responsibilities and under the legal protection of a foreign power?

The nationalists were not alone in their opposition. For some time a minority Jewish group—composed in the main of students, younger teachers, and professionals, many of them with "progressive" tendencies—had been in touch with liberal Moslems, holding discussion meetings, probing for a *modus vivendi* between Jewry and nationalism. To this maverick wing of Jewish opinion, the alleged demands of the Jewish community chiefs in Morocco were a step back toward segregation and isolation rather than one forward toward security and mutual understanding. Instead of cravenly seeking special privileges and a spurious protection, the independents argued, Jewry should join hands with the best elements of Moslem leadership and work for the only kind of society in which none would need special favors—a truly free and equal Morocco.

In its enthusiasm, this rebel faction may fairly be said to have gone overboard. It tended to slight France's solid contributions to Morocco and Moroccan Jewry. Denying that the official community leadership spoke for all Moroccan Jews, it occasionally arrogated to itself that same authority. It showed no prudence in its unrestrained attacks on Jewish leaders. It seemed, with a faintly servile tone, to be publicly accepting the nationalist thesis at face value. An article this July in a Casablanca newspaper by a young attorney, Meyer Toledano, the faction's sparkplug, won a great deal of favorable comment for its courage, but also caused some consternation by its effusiveness—notably, Toledano said that the ousting of Ben Yussef had been "a day of mourning" for Moroccan Jewry!

But events have shown that these Jewish dissidents were more in tune with the changing times than the more cautious leaders they assailed. The first thunderous blow against the old Jewish policy was dealt when Resident General Grandval, shortly after his arrival, took the previously unthinkable step of consulting with outlawed Istiqlalists and native trade-unionists. Day by day it grew clearer that, even if Grandval himself should be discarded, France was committing herself to a vast retreat. Whatever the exact terms of the compromise after Grandval's ouster, there could be little doubt that Moroccan self-government was no longer a vague future possibility. Where did this leave Jewish leadership, with its fetish of French "guarantees"? Apparently right alongside the Jews of Tunisia, who after witnessing similar developments had finally settled for an innocuous French-Tunisian subscription to the Declaration of the Rights of Man, without even a bare mention of Jews.

The Moroccan Jewish spokesmen have discreetly bent to the wind. At Aix-les-Bains in late August, while the nationalists were negotiating with the French, the Jews "nego-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tiated" with the nationalists. Jacques Dahan, head of the countrywide Council of Communities, together with the chiefs of three key local communities and a Paris delegate of the World Jewish Congress, met representatives of Istiqlal and the somewhat more moderate Democratic Independence party (PDI). According to reliable reports, the Jews dropped their insistence on a special status. They agreed instead to accept the same status, rights, and obligations as Moslems in the modern, secular, democratic, and constitutional state that—the Moslems across the table assured them—was the goal earnestly and sincerely desired by Moroccan nationalism.

WHEN I left Morocco for equally troubled Algeria shortly after, the reaction to this profound change in Jewish policy was beginning to manifest itself. A few complaints were softly voiced, by leaders who had stayed at home, that those who went to Aix had yielded too much; they had placed too much trust in Moslem pledges and had cut off the possibility of a Jewish retreat, if these pledges were not kept, by shutting the door of appeal to France. The reply to this was that history itself, and no mere agreement by the Jews, would close that door sooner or later in any case. In Rabat at the beginning of October, when the nationalists finally succeeded in driving Ben Yussef's successor from the throne, the Resident General solemnly acknowledged over the radio France's "eminent goal" of aiding Morocco "toward an independence in the management of her own affairs that will grow greater each day." In Paris at the same moment, the French cabinet minister then in charge of such matters was confirming to the world press the existence of "a modern Moroccan elite" to which "increasingly large responsibilities . . . can be confided from today onward." The government that made these promises stands or falls on the slippery stage of French politics, but the commitments themselves were not to be ignored.

Meanwhile it was plain to all factions of Jewish opinion (including the most bullish "pro-nationalists") that the case for emigration—an emigration carried out without panic and in manageable dimension—was as irrefutable as ever. On the other hand, it was universally conceded, even by active Zionists, that a Jewish community was likely to go on existing in Morocco for time beyond reckoning. This prospect was not seen as necessarily a dark one. If such a community could produce the miracle of a society in which Jews and Moslems lived together in friendship and equality, the benefits might extend far beyond the frontiers of the Moroccan experiment.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JEW AND GENTILE IN THE NEW SOUTH

Segregation at Sundown

HARRY L. GOLDEN

THERE is very little real anti-Semitism in the South. There is even a solid tradition of philo-Semitism, the explanation of which lies in the very character of Southern Protestantism itself—in the Anglo-Calvinist devotion to the Old Testament and the Hebrew prophets, and the lack of emphasis on the Easter story which has been so closely connected with European anti-Semitism.

Nevertheless, segregation of a curious sort between Jew and Gentile does exist there. It is confined to the cities and larger towns, and to precisely those middle-class and proprietary circles in which Jews and Gentiles have an identity of interests—"Friction occurs," Shmarya Levin used to say, "where planes meet."*

THAT EVENING SUN. Every evening, in the larger communities of the South, a curious transformation takes place in the relations of Jew and Gentile. During the day, associations may have been genuinely cordial, even close. But when the sun goes down, there is a tacit agreement to go their several ways. Rarely, indeed, does a Jew visit a Gentile home. Hardly ever does a Gentile pay a visit to the home of his Jewish acquaintance.

The hope of a final social *"rapprochement,"* a breaking down of the curfew barrier, may explain the early enthusiasm of Southern Jews for the National Conference of Christians and Jews. This hope was never realized. The Gentile member made it all too clear, by attending its functions always alone, even when the invitation specifically included his wife, that his interest in the project was purely civic. In the Southern tradition, the presence of *the wife* at an occasion is a symbol of the social union of the participants. By the same token, when on rare occasions a Jew was invited to meet with his daytime Christian colleagues for civic reasons (polio drive, Community Chest, credit association, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, politics), the invitation was for himself alone—never did he bring his wife, nor was he expected to.

There are Jewish merchants who have had pleasant personal relations with Gentile colleagues, associates, and competitors for fifteen or twenty years without ever meeting *the wife*.

RURAL PHILO-SEMITISM. Segregation of Jew and Gentile disappears entirely, however, when one leaves the cities and passes into the small towns and rural communities of the agricultural plains.

The Jew in the small farming center is

No one knows better than HARRY L. GOLDEN what it is like to be a Jew and live as one in the South, where the Jewish participation in American history is of longer date, and was perhaps of greater intimacy until lately, than elsewhere in the country. Mr. Golden was born in New York City in 1902 and has for many years edited the famous *Carolina Israelite* in Charlotte, N.C. He is also the author of nearly fifty pamphlets on Jewish life in the South. This marks his fourth appearance in these pages, his most recent previous contribution being an article on some of the problems of the Southern rabbinate ("A Pulpit in the South") in our December 1953 issue.

*The communities I have studied at first hand include: in North Carolina—Asheville, Charlotte, Greensboro, Kinston, Lenoir, Windsor, Williamston, Monroe; in South Carolina—Columbia, Greenville, Camden, Orangeburg, Florence, Kingstree, Rock Hill; in Georgia—Atlanta, Albany, Bainbridge; in Alabama—Birmingham and Talladega. I believe my generalizations will hold for the rest of the South, excepting of course Florida and probably Louisiana, which require separate studies.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

really in an enviable position. He keeps the store (the "Jew store") and all his civic and social relations with the rest of the community start from this fixed point. He is "our" Jew to small-town Southerners, and they often take care of him with a zeal and devotion otherwise bestowed only on the Confederate monument in the square. There have been cases where the schools have closed an hour earlier for his funeral, in some towns they have flown the flag at half-mast on the Court House building, and high-school trophies have been presented in his memory.

So well established is his social position that the society editor of the local newspaper regularly records the comings and goings of his entire family, the births, the weddings, the Bar Mitzvahs, the visits of relatives. The editor calls on him as part of his regular rounds, and once a month or so, he may ask the Jewish merchant for a "wise saying by one of the rabbis" for the editorial page. There is an annual Passover story, and during the High Holidays the ladies of the several churches will make a tour of the Jewish homes to examine books and "ceremonial objects."

There is no social segregation whatsoever, no quota system. The Jewish merchant takes his regular turn as president of Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Retail Merchants, Country Club, Chamber of Commerce, and Community Chest. And it is precisely his "conspicuousness," his Jewish religion, that gives him a security and allows him a relaxation that would be the envy of his co-religionists of the metropolitan areas of the North, or for that matter, of the larger urban centers of the South.

It is a standing joke at the weekly civic club luncheons in the small towns of the South to put a ham platter in front of the Jewish member just as he is taking his place. Everybody watches during the singing of "Onward Christian Soldiers," and then they all laugh as one of the serving ladies, in all likelihood a member of the True Blue Bible Class, comes running down the aisle with the "kosher" dish: fried chicken, black-eyed peas, and mashed potatoes. (These Southerners are deeply concerned over the possibility of an "oversight" occurring when there are Jewish guests at their annual banquets. If pork is on the menu, they automatically serve you chicken, without comment or inquiry.)

The political influence of the individual small-town Southern Jew is astonishing, not only on the local level but also on the level of state and national politics. It is based on personal prestige rather than the power of the "Jewish vote," and is often greater than that of whole communities of Jews in the large cities. The Jewish storekeeper is often on first-name terms with the governor of the state, the Senators, and the Congressman and judges of his district. These men stopped by his store during their early political campaigns for sheriff, county attorney, and other minor offices, and the friendship thus begun continues through their lives.

If only for reasons of self-interest, Jews would do well to eliminate their own prejudice, where it exists, against "wool-hats," "red necks," and "yokels." The rural peoples of the South hark back to the agrarian civilization of the original Thirteen Colonies, and they are the living heirs of the old American tradition of philo-Semitism.

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK *(Am Ha-Sefer)*. There is a touching naivety in the small-town Southerner's respect for the Jewishness of the Jew in his community. It springs from the Southern Protestant's own attachment to Biblical Judaism, which is manifested in the basic tenets of the several denominations: "The Open Bible on the Altar" (and no other adornment) of the Presbyterians; the Methodists' "Faith without works is dead" ("Good deeds save from Death"); and the Baptists' lack of a formal creed, their congregational autonomy, and their intense individualism. As in Judaism, no special holiday (not excepting Christmas) is considered as important as the weekly Sabbath; and the blue laws of the "Still Sabbath" are only paralleled among Orthodox Jews and the Puritans of Colonial New England—the lat-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ter, along with the rural South of modern times, being the heirs of the Sabbatarian Protestant sects of the British Isles. The orthodox Southern Presbyterians, organized in the Associated Reform church (A.R.P.), permit only the Psalms of David to be sung in church during the Sabbath service; Sabbath meals are served cold; and the Sunday comics are folded away for the children to read on Monday.

The small-town Southerner takes it for granted that to be a Jew is to be a religious Jew, that his friend the storekeeper fully possesses that Hebraic tradition handed down through the centuries for which the Southern Christian has so deep a respect. As the Jew in a small Southern town goes about his business of selling dry goods or ready-to-wear clothing, he rarely suspects the symbolic role he enacts for the Gentile society roundabout him—he represents the unbroken tie with sacred history and the prophets of the Bible, he is the "living witness" to the "Second Coming of Christ," the link between the beginning and the end of things.*

This has placed a burden upon the learning and piety of the small-town Southern Jew that he is not always able to support. It has caused many a Southern Jew to reexamine those religious values which he had well-nigh abandoned. A Protestant clergyman or a Sunday school teacher who knows the Pentateuch by heart will stop by the store to ask his opinion on some fine point of Biblical exegesis. Needless to say, the visitor often goes away with something less than a complete answer. I know merchants who travel fifty and sixty miles a week to attend a Jewish adult study group—"so I can give these people some kind of an answer!"

Even in the larger cities it has become standard practice in recent years among Protestant churches and seminaries to visit the synagogue or temple at least once a year in order to participate in a Sabbath service. A rabbi in one of the industrial cities of the Carolinas told me of a recent visit by an entire Methodist congregation. During the "open forum" after the service, the Methodist clergyman asked several questions about the Talmud. The rabbi commented to me: "For the first time in my career as a rabbi I spent two hours reciting the *Ethics of the Fathers* to a congregation."

This respect for the Jew as the heir, guardian, and living embodiment of the Old Testament tradition is notably evident in the absence of any organized attempt to convert him to Christianity. (The Methodists were the first officially to describe American culture as a "Judaic-Christian civilization"—at their Kansas City conference in 1928.) Evangelists, from the itinerant tent preacher to the world-renowned Reverend Billy Graham, address their appeal exclusively to "Gentiles" (Protestants), urging them to accept Jesus as their personal Savior. The only appeal that is ever directed to the Jews comes from the few Jewish-convert evangelists active in the urban industrial centers.† Far from attempting to proselytize the Jew, the small-town Southerner is more likely to be found supporting Jewish religious activities. Recently, the twenty Jewish families in Orangeburg, S. C., a farming town, announced that they would build a temple, setting for themselves a building-fund quota of $35,000. A self-appointed "Christian Committee" immediately presented pledges of $6,000. A few years earlier, the Gentile community of Rock Hill, S. C., helped to put up the local synagogue. These are not isolated cases, by any means. And there is no doubt that they could be many times multiplied, were it not for the fact that Jews as a general rule do not think it good public relations to carry their fund-raising campaigns to the general public.

The "Bonds for Israel" professionals have learned how to use Southern willingness to contribute to Jewish causes to stimulate Jewish contributions. When they come to a

*I am willing to agree that Southern philo-Semitism, involving as it does only the religious or "positive" Jew, may also be interpreted as part of the Gentile wish for Jewish separateness.

†On the Jewish-convert evangelists, see my "Hebrew-Christian Evangelist: Southern Style," COMMENTARY, December 1950.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Southern town, they try first to sell a bond to one of the leading Christians in the community. As far as is possible, they advertise this purchase, try to make it the "kickoff" of the campaign, on the reasonable assumption that the local Jews, if only out of embarrassment, will bestir themselves to raise the rest of the quota among their own.

Nor is it difficult to sell a Government of Israel Bond to a Southern Christian. Only in the largest cities—Richmond, Atlanta, Louisville, etc.—is there any anti-Zionist sentiment. Only in such large cities, too, is there any non-Zionist or anti-Zionist sentiment among the Jews. It is precisely the Jew of the small farming centers, the one most "integrated" in Gentile society, who is also the most ardent Zionist.

Without the approval of the Gentile community around him, and in the absence of any organized Zionist movement, this would almost certainly not be the case. As a matter of fact, the Jew in the small town is expected by his Christian neighbors to be Zionist, even as he is expected to be religious. The attitude there of Southern Protestantism toward a Jewish Palestine is simple and decisive: "It's in the Book." For the revival of Judaism in the small Southern town, we might perhaps assign a good deal of the credit to the Southern Christian.*

THE LEO FRANK CASE. How, in the absence of a traditional anti-Semitic feeling—and in the face of a tradition of philo-Semitism—can we explain the also uniquely Southern phenomena, Tom Watson, Thomas J. Heflin, Theodore Bilbo, the anti-Semitic diatribes of the Ku Klux Klan, and the Leo Frank lynching in 1913.

This one anti-Semitic aberration in the history of the South has to be seen in the social, economic, and political context that existed in 1913. Georgia, since Colonial days, had had the largest Jewish population of the South. Oglethorpe had established Georgia as the only wholly secular colony in the New World, and the only one except Rhode Island in which Jews enjoyed full political rights. The Civil War, the Reconstruction period that followed, and a high rate of assimilation had all but eliminated the Sephardic Jews of Colonial days and the German Jews of the mid-19th century. As the South, at the turn of the century, began to change from an overwhelmingly agrarian into a mixed agricultural and industrial economy, Jewish merchants of Eastern European origin flocked to the region and established the foundations for the mighty enterprise the Jewish communities represent today. This Jewish migration from Eastern Europe (by way of the Northern centers) began in the first decade of this century, when the textile mills were beginning to move southward from New England. As the population grew, Jewish merchants established retail stores in every city, town, and rural way station in the region. Nearly all these retail establishments sold "soft goods"—ready-to-wear apparel, clothing, and accessories. Nearly all prospered, and entered into rivalry with the native middle class, arousing the envy of the native poor.

Meanwhile Joseph M. Brown was elected Governor of Georgia in 1909 on a platform promising the people bread ("Hoke [Smith] for Hunger, Brown for Bread"). The population of Atlanta was swollen by an influx of farmers and sharecroppers looking for work in one of the new industries, or just waiting around for the Federal aid promised by President Wilson to enable the banks to finance the cotton crop. As the economic

*In Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, there are sixty-nine organized congregations (27 Reform, 25 Conservative, 17 Orthodox), with sixty full-time rabbis—an average of one congregation for every seven hundred Jews, as against a national average of one congregation for every 2,800. (My estimated national average is based on the statistics presented in the *American Jewish Year Book* for 1955.) Of course, there are other factors involved in this higher representation of religious organizations in the South: the greater distances between communities; the absence of many of the cultural, sporting, and entertainment resources of the metropolitan areas; the complete social segregation, in the urban areas, of Jew from Gentile, which makes the synagogue or temple the center of all religious and communal activities, etc. But the religiousness of the region—the "Bible Belt"—is the most important factor of all.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

panic increased the feuding political factions provided diversions in the shape of a "vice-crusade" every two weeks, agitation over free silver, and exclamations of alarm at seeing "our white, Southern, Protestant womanhood now going into industry." The Frank lynching sprang from fear and economic distress already there. All that was needed for a popular explosion was for some talented bigot to find a symbolic victim on which the mob could vent its fury.

The first anti-Semitic appeal in the South came, oddly enough, from the early Populists during their great struggle against the conservatives, and in an effort to capture the Negro vote. This battle raged all through the 1890's and the early 1900's. The victory of the conservatives resulted in the elimination of the Negro as a voter and the establishment of complete racial segregation. Elias Carr of North Carolina and the lesser Populists said: "Rothschild and the Jews mean to send back into slavery our downtrodden Negro brethren." Tom Watson, who later incited the mob that lynched Leo Frank in 1913, also made his original appeal to the "downtrodden Negro brethren," but instead of "Rothschild" the Pope of Rome was his target, who, he said, had "a Roman harem of Negro concubines." In an effort to revive his fast-waning political influence, he turned not only on the Jews, but eventually on the Negroes as well—an example followed by many latter-day Southern demagogues and neo-Populists.

Tom Watson unloosed the most serious anti-Semitic campaign in the history of the South. Aside from the fact that it led to the brutal lynching of an innocent man, it was a nightmare for the Jewish community of Atlanta, and unquestionably encouraged the anti-Semitism of the Ku Klux Klan movement of 1915-1927.

This is not the place to go into the details of the Frank case, except to point out that even Tom Watson had to take cognizance of the inherent Southern respect for Biblical Judaism. In his weekly paper *The Jeffersonian*, in which he poured out his venom against the Jewish people, he found it necessary to write an article with the title, "Jesus Was Not a Jew."

Forty-two years later, and after a careful study of the newspapers of the day and the testimony of the trial, there are several facts that impress themselves upon me. One is that Tom Watson in 1913 had "respectable" (middle-class) support, otherwise he could not have succeeded in Atlanta. The daily press of Atlanta assumed Frank's guilt from the first day of his arrest; its handling of the case, especially the "medical" details, was as unrestrained as Watson's. Neither the press, nor the clergy, nor the civic leadership disputed a single statement in Watson's campaign against an entire people. When an honorable Southerner, Governor John M. Slaton, tried to stem the tide—commuting Frank's sentence even while a mob surrounded his mansion shouting "John M. Slaton, King of the Jews"—he was not only destroyed politically, but eventually had to flee for his own safety.

But the passion of the mob exhausted itself in the Frank case. Tom Watson's call for a boycott of Jewish stores after Frank's lynching was a complete failure. The Ku Klux Klan, reborn on Stone Mountain in 1915, seemed to flourish for a while, however, in the aftermath. Thomas Dixon's novels, *The Clansman* and *The Leopard's Spots*, were received respectfully. The press, clergy, and civic leadership kept silent about the Klan. But the first respectable voice that spoke out against it also pronounced its doom. The break came in 1922 when Governor Thomas Hardwick of Georgia openly demanded the Klan's unmasking, and editor Grover Hall of the Montgomery (Ala.) *Advertiser* called upon the Christians of the South to repudiate this "anti-American hate movement."

Subsequent anti-Negro, anti-liberal, anti-Darwin, anti-Jew, and anti-modern spellbinders rarely aimed their fire against the Jews of the South, who regained the peace of mind they had lost during the Frank case. When these demagogues did speak of Jews, they usually specified "those New York Jews." (The geography has shifted in recent

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

years; you now hear references to "those Jews of Miami.") Cole Blease, Cotton Ed Smith, Bob Reynolds, Gene Talmadge, Herman Talmadge, and even Theodore Bilbo often spoke of their "Jewish friends," and of course they had some. For Reynolds and the two Talmadges at least, their friendships with Jews involved both political support and substantial campaign contributions.

Efforts to revive the Ku Klux Klan in the 40's found not a single respectable ally. Thanks in large measure to the efforts of editors Willard Cole of the Whiteville (N.C.) *News-Reporter,* Horace Carter of the Tabor City (N.C.) *Tribune,* and reporter Jay Jenkins of the Raleigh (N.C.) *News and Observer,* the Klan was exposed even before it got well started and its leaders were rounded up and sent to jail.

In November of 1954, a brilliant young Jewish attorney, Morris Abram, carried the city of Atlanta—scene of the Leo Frank lynching—in his race for Congress. The Charlotte (N. C.) *News,* in a recent editorial on the Salk polio vaccine, commented that in 1955 "the anti-Semite does not have a single respectable ally in the South."

YANKEE INFLUENCE. And yet it is precisely in Charlotte, North Carolina, that we can observe *apartheid* as between Jews and the white Gentile middle class in fixed operation. It is not of anti-Semitic origin necessarily, and in part it is a Northern importation.

In Charlotte the "restricted" residential area was unknown until a few years ago. Its emergence coincided with the city's growth from 80,000 in 1930 to 160,000 in 1955. Northern capital had a large part in this growth; the city today contains nearly 450 branches and warehouses of national business concerns.

With this development of Charlotte as an important distribution center came a tremendous influx of representatives and managers of the national concerns. They introduced a social pattern they had worked out for themselves in the North—country club society, and restricted residential areas.

The country club and the restricted area were never part of upper-class Southern tradition. The old families lived in baronial isolation among lesser neighbors. The mark of social distinction in the "old" South was membership in an "Assembly," or in one of the societies based on national-religious origin—the Society of St. Andrews (Scotland), St. Cecilia (Huguenot), and St. George (England). Introduction of country club society was a successful attempt by the Northern newcomers, and the Southern *nouveau riche* in alliance with them, to bypass the requirement of birth ("Who was her family before she married?") which the Southern agrarian aristocracy imposed.

It was inevitable that the Jews of the South, belonging to a single proprietary class of small capitalists—ready-to-wear, credit jewelry, textile manufacture and distribution, textile machinery, chemicals, cotton waste, metal scrap, mill agents, jobbers, wholesalers and traveling salesmen—should similarly try to align themselves with the new society. It was part of their effort to win the prestige that ordinarily follows wealth, and also to break with their immigrant past. The new society would seem to be the American group or class to which they naturally belonged. From the old aristocracy, with its fourth-generation requirements, they were naturally barred, though hardly more so than the "common people" of the South, or the newly emerged middle class. For wealth played a small part in the self-constituted aristocracy of the South; birth, so-called, was everything.

But it was inevitable also that, in his efforts to join the new society, made up as it was largely of social climbers, the Jew should be rebuffed. No hatred of the Jew was involved; the country club set was trying to evolve a homogeneous group, from which the Jews were barred by definition. Anti-Semitic attitudes that cropped up in the process were no more than a rationalization of the desire to mix only with the "right kind of people," meaning people like themselves. The Northern manager brought this attitude with him as part of his baggage.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Southern social climber, left to his own devices, might conceivably have been less set in the matter of excluding Jews. He had his own problem; he was running away from his own impoverished past; the Jew was the least of his worries.

PREACHER JONES VS. DR. JONES. As the South has advanced from an agrarian to an industrial economy, and grown more wealthy in the process, there has been a constant stratification of social life in the industrial-urban centers. Gone is the democracy of equal poverty.

In a religious community, it is not surprising that this stratification expressed itself through the churches. Episcopalians tended to look down on the Presbyterians, who in turn showed little enthusiasm for the Methodists. And if a man announced that he had become a Baptist (through marriage, for instance), both Presbyterians and Methodists had a standing joke: "Boy, you can't *become* a Baptist, you have to be born one." And, of course, all of them looked down on the more primitive sects: the Church of God, Holiness, Free Will Baptists. These were the sects of the mill-workers (*lint-heads*), sharecroppers, the one-time poor whites, the propertyless.

The process did not end there. Within the various creeds, divisions based on wealth and growing social prestige began to take place.* The Presbyterians in the beginning were the "buckskin boys," the plain folks as opposed to the Episcopalians (Cavaliers versus Roundheads). But after the industrial revolution and the broadening out of the Southern economy, new and sharper social distinctions emerged, the middle-class character of Southern Presbyterianism became more pronounced, and the whole tendency was toward a more "uptown" and "Episcopalian" attitude. For the first time in the history of Calvinism, Presbyterian churches began to be built in the cities with divided chancels and with a cross on the steeple. Methodists and Baptists in turn, as their congregations pass more and more into the middle class, are moving "uptown."

The propertyless, the "lint-heads," the working people were left to their own devices "downtown." Shut out for the most part from the established churches, they passed by the hundreds of thousands into the tents of the itinerant evangelists and helped to form the new sects. The newest major denomination, the Church of God, has risen from a membership of less than 100,000 in 1935 to well over a million in 1955. The embryonic Holiness Church waits in readiness to fill the gap as soon as the Church of God completes its own urban-industrial transformation from tent and meeting house to vestments and spired cathedrals.

THE "JEW STORE." A similar process has taken place in the Jewish community. In the beginning was the peddler of German-Jewish origin. The Southern community looked upon him as some sort of "Dutchman." (In early New England, too, writes Oscar Handlin in *Adventure in Freedom,* the Jewish peddler was looked upon "as just another kind of German.") Both Josephus Daniels, in his *Tar Heel Editor,* and Bernice Kelly Harris, *Folk Plays of Eastern Carolina,* speak of the "Dutch peddler" of the 19th century. A death notice in the Statesville (N. C.) *Landmark* of October 11, 1884, refers to the transportation of the "remains of A. Blum, a Dutch peddler," from Wilmington, North Carolina, to Baltimore. The term "Jew peddler" began to appear in the early part of the century, changing into "Jew store" —still widely used among the rural whites and Negroes—when the peddler settled down. It was rarely meant to be insulting; quite in the ordinary way of things, rural customers entering the establishment for the first time would ask, "Is this the Jew store?" Indeed, it was rumored that a Jewish merchant would make every possible concession to record a first sale for the day, and so farmers would vie with each other to be the

*For the data and conclusions on class distinctions among the Protestant sects of the South, I am indebted to Dr. Liston Pope's excellent study. *Millhands and Preachers* (1942).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

first one in the store, in the hope of getting a bargain.

One reason for the immediate success of the Jewish merchants was their willingness to cater to the Negro customer as no white Gentile merchant would do. They permitted the Negro to try on the merchandise for size and fit without the obligation of making a purchase. The rule governing Negroes in the white Gentile stores, ever since the Reconstruction days, had been, *"Don't touch it if you're not going to buy it."*

Of course, some Jews are offended by the term "Jew store," mistaking its innocent character. There are Jewish merchants who, taking exception to a Negro's asking, "Is this a Jew store?" retort, "Yes, this is a Jew store for niggers."

The East European Jews who followed the German Jews below the Mason-Dixon Line were quite at ease in the South—how were the Negroes any different from the peasants they used to trade with in Poland or Lithuania? To be sure, they would no more think of mixing socially with them than they did with the peasants of Eastern Europe. Such social contacts as they had were with their own, or with friendly and curious white Southerners.

But as many of the Jewish storekeepers prospered, the "Jew store" would become the town's leading department store. The sons of the merchants went into other fields, and into the professions, and many of them prospered too.

THE COUNTRY CLUB SET. As a member of a middle class of proprietors and professionals, the Southern Jew naturally seeks the society of hi seconomic opposite numbers in the Gentile middle class. Apart from this "natural" tendency, there is his desire for *koved,* the status that such social contacts bring him in his own group. "He has many Christian friends," the middle-class Jew of the South says admiringly—and he does not mean Christian mill workers or service station attendants. A friendship with someone below his own economic level would probably do him more harm than good. Moreover, the Southern Jew of the city lives in constant fear of someone's passing an anti-Semitic remark "to his face." In polite middle-class circles, this danger is reduced to a minimum. Below "the top" he is not sure, and refuses to risk it. His friend Tom may be "all right," but he can never be sure of Tom's luncheon companion or the untried visitor to Tom's home.

But when the Jew seeks his outside social contacts at the top of urban-Gentile society, he is up against the most highly selective members of the entire middle class. The Gentile who establishes "restricted" residential areas and exclusive country clubs is trying to break with his own rural or mountain background or is a Northerner for whom these are accepted things. He has no patience with "climbers" of another group (any more than the wealthy German Jew had for his poorer and less assimilated Lithuanian or Polish brother); they cannot add to his status, and they may diminish it.

This spirit of exclusiveness on the part of the Gentile middle class was responded to by Southern Jews with their own country clubs—and their own kind of exclusiveness. The pattern has been fairly consistent. First there is a long period of trying to get into a Gentile country club. Occasionally a solitary Jew is admitted and the others become hopeful and wait some more. Eventually they give up and build a club of their own.

There are eleven such Jewish country clubs in Virginia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia, with an estimated aggregate budget of four million dollars a year. In the early days these clubs were organized on the basis of European origin, with the German Jews in one club and the Russian and Polish Jews in another. In recent years, however, as everywhere, these lines have disappeared completely; the cleavage now is strictly economic. In the larger cities where there are Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform congregations, the country club draws "impartially" from the top economic group in each congregation. In one city recently, a less wealthy group in the country club, apparently feeling a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

chill in the air, withdrew and formed another—so that they could be among "their own."

The Jewish country club set has therefore not only created its own "separate but equal" social facilities in answer to social segregation, but has also created a system of segregation within the Jewish group. In at least four Jewish country clubs, moreover, the by-laws permit a Gentile guest, but do not allow a member to bring a Jewish guest who is a resident of the area from which the club draws its membership.

The country club is having a hard time keeping going. Rising costs of maintaining costly clubhouses, golf links, etc., has a good deal to do with the difficulties. There are indications, too, that the younger generation is bored with it all.

The slot machine was always an important factor in meeting the costs of the Southern country club, Jewish and Gentile. In this connection, I cannot refrain from quoting from an article in a recent issue of the *Southern Israelite* of Atlanta, Georgia (Thirtieth Anniversary Number), called "Three Decades of Atlanta's Communal Life," by Edward M. Kahn. "Until recently the slot machine was an accepted part of club life. For many women playing the slot machine was a sort of ritual. The machines were a reliable and dependable source of big revenue for all the clubs in town. But through no voluntary disclaimer by the clubs, and under circumstances beyond their control, all the slot machines were removed from all the clubs. Overcoming the first shock of this interference with American rights and freedom, the clubs have had to adjust their financing by increasing membership dues, encouraging private parties, etc."

Which reminds me of an incident involving a Gentile country club in one of the Carolina cities. This club also lost its slot machines. Confronted with a high budgetary problem as a result, they decided to take in Jews to make up the loss. But, alas, it all came too late. The Jews were already building their own.

THE MARGINAL LIBERAL SOCIETY. There are of course exceptions to this pattern of Gentile-Jewish social segregation. There are an increasing number of Jews, in college towns and in some of the larger cities, who do not need to seek out social relations with Gentiles, but acquire them naturally in the kind of liberal professional world they inhabit: educators, artists, scientists, and writers. Together with their Gentile colleagues, they form a "self-sustaining" group. Interestingly enough, in the medical, dental, and legal professions, there are no "self-sustaining" social relationships; here the status of the individual may depend as much on his social contacts as on his ability, and Gentile-Jewish segregation is therefore as rigid as it is in the proprietary classes.

Mixed marriages in the South, which perhaps deserve a separate study, intrude upon this scene. They are on the increase; and though a mixed marriage represents the overcoming of a very high and solid social barrier, the greater frequency of such marriages is doing nothing to break down the barrier. True, the Jew today no longer goes into mourning for the traditional seven-day *shiveh* period when a son or a close relative marries a Gentile. But he is not happy about it either. After the very quiet wedding has taken place, you won't find anyone risking a *mazeltov* to the parents.

The emphatic rejection of mixed marriage by the Jews has tended to obscure a corresponding attitude on the part of the Gentile. While he may accept the union, he, too, is by no means enthusiastic. The attitude is expressed on both sides in the quiet wedding, as opposed to the "big wedding" of Jewish tradition and the "church wedding" of Christian custom. If it has to be, let it be done discreetly.

In nearly all such marriages, the Jew must bring more to the union than just himself. This may not be a condition of the relationship. The couple, however, anticipate social complications on both sides, and sense that a measure of economic security is necessary right from the beginning, to smooth the way. In nearly every case, the Gentile wife

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

passes up onto a higher economic level than she knew before marriage, but on the other hand she surrenders her status as a member of the majority group. While often her immediate family will accept the marriage, she loses many if not all of her earlier social relations and friendships inside her own social and religious group. In addition, she is very often received with coldness by the Jewish world, particularly the women, whose attitude is expressed with notable asperity in the age-old question: "He couldn't find a Jewish girl to marry?"

Faced with these problems, the couple usually has this alternative: to make the best of it within the Jewish group, or to join the growing number of Gentiles and Jews who make a life for themselves outside their respective communities.

In all of the larger Southern cities, there are always a few Jews, calling themselves liberals, for whom the "racial problem" is a major concern. Together with like-minded Gentiles—Protestant clergymen, Unitarians, Quakers, labor-organizers, writers, artists, scientists (many of whom also occupy a marginal social position)—and even some members of the Jewish proprietary class, they have welded themselves into a small but cohesive, active minority. Often the membership in this group cuts across racial lines, and in some cities represents the only direct line of communication between the white and Negro races. (The Young Women's Christian Association is the only organization in most Southern cities that consistently provides dining-room facilities for interracial luncheons.) Such a liberal group may just "talk," or it may expand into an Urban League or some other well-defined educational or political organization interested in desegregation. Like as not, a Protestant clergyman has initiated the project. In Rock Hill, South Carolina, a Roman Catholic priest, Father Maurice Sheen, together with the Protestant Mayor, Emmet Jerome, and a Jewish merchant, A. R. Suritz, organized such a group, which has become the model for the rest of the South. Now when the United States State Department has distinguished guests from Scandinavia or Western Germany who wish to study race relations in the South, they are sent to Father Maurice, or to Jerome or Suritz, in Rock Hill.

But the Southern Jewish proprietary class is inclined to be nervous about too liberal a concern with the Negro problem on the part of fellow Jews—they call it "rocking the boat." In the current Negro movement toward desegregation, they have maintained a strict neutrality. They are too much exposed themselves, their attitude seems to be, to become "crusaders" for others. Though they will not say so openly, much of their argument for neutrality is based on the folklore that Gentile society must have its *kapporeh* (scapegoat), and that if the Southerners should lose their Negro *kapporeh,* they might very well look around for another.

It is the irony of ironies, however, that in the South of racial segregation; of separate schools and churches for the Negro, white, Indian, rural, mountain, mill-town, and "uptown" populations; and with the rigid social segregation between the urban Gentile middle class and the Jewish (as well as Greek and Italian) proprietors—the closest social relations between Jew and Gentile are the result of a common interest in the Negro.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BONN JOINS THE CO-EXISTENCE GAME

Again: Whither Germany?

HERBERT LUETHY

THE state of frightened pensiveness into which the political thinkers of the West were thrown by Adenauer's trip to Moscow, early in September, does not lack its ludicrous side. The Russians, it seems, won a great triumph by getting themselves recognized—by Bonn! One has to pinch oneself—whose status had been in doubt, Bonn's or that of the vast, powerful, and victory-swollen USSR? Hadn't Moscow chosen to regard the Federal Republic of West Germany as a puppet regime, a counterpart in their eyes to what the West, with infinitely more warrant, considered the "Democratic Republic" of East Germany to be? Wherein, then, lies the Russian "triumph"?

Moscow's invitation to Adenauer signified that the Russians had drawn the logical conclusion for their own policy from the Western powers' recognition, just a year ago, of the sovereignty of the Federal Republic. The Soviet note of invitation said as much: "The Soviet government is of the opinion that the renunciation of West Germany's status as an occupied country . . . has now created the indispensable conditions for the normalization and establishment of direct relations between the USSR and the Federal Republic." For Russia to recognize the sovereignty granted against her wish to a West Germany created against her will, and without even asking reciprocal recognition for her German satellite, was to demonstrate a realism at which the world is still marveling. Was Chancellor Adenauer really expected haughtily to refuse to recognize the Soviet Union?

It is true that there was an effort, at Bonn and elsewhere, to cast him as a new Saint George sallying forth to Moscow to slay the dragon. Was this mere folly, or was it bluff? Perhaps a mixture of both. Insofar as it was bluff, its staging was certainly successful. Adenauer was able to "sell" the establishment of diplomatic relations between West Germany and the Soviet Union as so enormous a concession on his part that everybody is still amazed that he consented to it without getting anything more in return than a verbal promise to send home the German prisoners-of-war still in Russia. But nobody seems amazed at the fact that the Russians, on their side, asked no price for their recognition of what until a moment before they had termed an "unreconstructed Nazi" government.

Otherwise, however, both sides held stubbornly to their previous positions. The Chancellor solemnly affirmed that his government considered itself the only one capable of speaking for all Germany, and that in his view the so-called Democratic Republic of East Germany was illegitimate, and had been repudiated by its own subjects. The Russians declared no less firmly that they recognized the Federal Republic as being on the same footing with the Democratic Republic of Pankow, with which—as they put it in their note of invitation to Adenauer—they entertained "good mutual relations on a solid basis of equality and

---

HERBERT LUETHY here takes a rather different view from that of most commentators of the results of Konrad Adenauer's recent trip to Moscow and of the present state of the "German problem." Mr. Luethy's political and social analysis is familiar to COMMENTARY readers. His latest book, *France Against Herself,* was published over here in translation several months ago, and was reviewed in our last number. Born in Basel, Switzerland, Mr. Luethy now lives in Paris. His present article was translated from the French by Lionel Abel.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

non-interference in internal affairs," and which they did not at all intend to sacrifice on the altar of German unity. It was therefore apparent from the first that for the immediate present there was nothing for the two governments to negotiate about; there was not even enough for them "to agree to disagree" about, since there were differences even over what the terms of disagreement were. The Chancellor declared that the restoration of German unity was the task of the four erstwhile occupying powers, whose diplomatic dealings at Geneva he did not wish to complicate with bilateral negotiation. The Russians declared that the restoration of German unity was the affair of the two German governments, and that all Adenauer had to do was consult with Grotewohl. They, the Russians, washed their hands of the whole matter. Thus for the time being Russia will in earnest continue to discuss German unity "over the heads of the Germans themselves," and the Bonn government will refuse to negotiate with Pankow. On the surface nothing was changed, except that there would now be a Russian ambassador in Bonn and a German one in Moscow.

An exchange of ambassadors may mean very little or it may mean a great deal. In this case it means a lot. The Germany of Adenauer was previously a creation of the Western powers; shut up inside the West, with its back to the Iron Curtain, its only doors and windows opened on the West. It was Western, certainly, in its interests and inclinations, Western by instinct—enthusiastically that. But chiefly it was Western by the force of circumstances and almost by definition. Henceforth if it remains Western, it will be by its *own* interests, intentions, and instinct pure and simple; nobody but the Russians have the force to compel it to decide otherwise. This, precisely, accounts for the vague anxiety in the West after Adenauer's visit to Moscow: West Germany now has the power to choose *not* to be Western—an anxiety entirely unconnected with the silly question of whether Adenauer "won or lost." At present, there is no reason for fear: Western Germany remains as Western as ever; the only difference is, now she has a window on the East.

A window, not a door. It is harder to get in and out of a window than a door, but all the same a window is a window and not an Iron Curtain. In the last two years, traffic and communication between East and West Germany have swelled enormously. Nor has this been due mainly to the one-way movement of refugees—although each new step in the international "lessening of tension" brings with it a new wave of emigration from East to West, since it means for the inhabitants of the East Zone a further loss of hope for their eventual liberation. So it was after the "summit" meeting at Geneva, and so it is now after the "normalization" of relations between Moscow and Bonn. But there has also been a busier circulation on the "legal" level, as more and more Germans cross and recross the border to spend their vacations, visit parents, relatives, or friends, revisit their home towns, or just attend fairs and festivals. The Iron Curtain has got some holes in it—or rather has been pushed back from the Elbe to the Oder.

It would have been easy for the Russians to keep the Iron Curtain as tightly shut as before, so that little by little the two Germanies would grow further apart and perhaps become really estranged from one another. Most of the West Germans, being fairly satisfied with their lot, were quite ready in any case to forget about their "oppressed brothers in the East" except during Sunday speeches; and Pieck and Grotewohl, for their part, could ask for nothing better. But Soviet Russia has no intention of cutting off her part of Germany from the rest: holding to it, she manages to hold at least to the possibility of getting the rest of Germany for herself. She wants Germany to keep worrying about and longing for her reunification —to which Russia holds the key. Meanwhile the increased informal intercourse between the East and West zones constitutes a process of "integration at the base," something like the famous unity at the base which Commu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nists in the 30's tried to promote through the Popular Front. The latter tactic, as well as the previous tactic of "united front from below," was justified in Communists' eyes by their conviction that, in the last analysis, a well-coordinated and disciplined minority, no matter how small, would always end up by capturing the amorphous and feckless crowd—*always*, even though one might have to wait.

For several months the lifting of the Iron Curtain reached even back beyond the eastern edge of the "Democratic Republic." West German tourists, journalists, and businessmen, in small but growing numbers, went up and down Eastern Europe, filling the newspapers of West Germany with their reports. In general, these reports were neither more nor less intelligent than those of many illustrious "Intourists" of the past who discovered that the inhabitants of Communist countries looked much like other men, and —what was even more surprising—that they all read Victor Hugo, Thomas Mann, and William Faulkner, right under the visitor's eyes as it were. There was one difference, nevertheless. These West German travelers were not seeing new and exotic lands for the first time, but were rediscovering countries full, for them, of memories—some of these affecting memories, others horrid. They found, that is, signs and traces of their own history; at any rate they were not foolish enough to fall for the sort of thing illustrated by the article of an eminent French ethnologist and political thinker (a man who wouldn't let you confuse two pre-Columbian Mexican tribes) stating that Vroclau (Breslau) was an old Slav settlement from which a few Prussian intruders had recently been chased.

This rediscovery of Eastern Europe by the Germans is an event of considerable importance. For ten years the East Germans had been as much—if not more—cut off from Eastern Europe as those in the West, for the "Democratic Republic" was hermetically sealed on *both* sides. Thus the Iron Curtain had spared all Germans the visible evidence of what had happened to them, the consciousness of the extent of their historical disaster. That Europe of the East which had been for a millennium a land of Germano-Slav co-existence and struggle, sown with German peoples and German culture, had simply disappeared from the map. Recognition of this fact gives the Germans occasion to reflect on their *débâcle*—and on the fifteen years of sleep-walking that led up to it. With a little more perspective, the role of Adolf Hitler in German history will appear as that of the exterminator of German life and culture in the whole immense space between the Baltic and the Caspian Seas. His "Thousand Year Reich" succeeded, in its twelve years, in destroying root and branch the work of some ten centures. In this context, the mass murder of the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe, with their Yiddish, which is a form of medieval German, and with the original attraction they felt for things German as representing enlightenment and emancipation, figures not only as an immense crime against humanity, but also as an integral part of the process of German suicide.

After 1945 everything German that once existed in Eastern Europe had sunk into the obscure past; it was, for Germans, as if the sea had swallowed up the countries east of the Elbe. But now this vast field of destruction emerges once again, and new travelers scour it with eyes rather different from those of innocent tourists from the West; their reports sometimes sound as lugubrious as ghost stories. Here and there, from Pomerania to Transylvania, they discover with surprise scattered groups of Germans living where they had lived before, with schools and "cultural circles," often very recently reopened (evidence of a wholly new tolerance on the part of the Communists). These are the pitiful remains of a proud past, and they give the Germans food for thought—all the more since ties are now being renewed between East Europe and German culture that were thought broken forever.

"Co-existence," and the momentary lifting of the Iron Curtain, have re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vealed other astonishing things to the Germans. Traditionally, France's press takes special notice of the place granted the French language at international meetings; it sometimes happens that the only thing it reports about these functions is the number of speakers expressing themselves in French. For the first time in years German newspaper readers have been able to read a report about their language being recognized in the same way at the International Congress of Historical Sciences in Rome—thanks, above all, to the massive participation of the Soviet satellite countries. "The Resurrection of a Language" was the title of the report of one German delegate, a Herr Schmitz van Vorst. "Anyone attending the postwar international meetings of learned societies in Western Europe knows to what degree German had become a marginal language at such functions. Now it is regaining its former central and mediating role. All the delegates from the East, the Yugoslavs, the Bulgarians, Rumanians, Hungarians, Czechs, sometimes even the Poles, and above all the Russians, spoke in German" (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* Sept. 24, 1955).

This preference for German has to be explained; one remembers the pre-war congresses at which the elite of Eastern Europe's intellectuals spoke the purest and most aristocratic French. The social and political upheaval in Eastern Europe has brought about a decisive change in this respect, and one very much like that produced a quarter of a century earlier by the revolution in Russia. In both cases it was precisely the aristocracy, with its intimate ties with French culture, that was uprooted. In Eastern Europe, as twenty-five years ago in Russia, an intelligentsia raised on Germano-Marxist culture has taken over the levers of command, an intelligentsia for whom German is the language of the sacred books, whose members wore out their breeches studying *Das Kapital,* and who were never touched by the slightest breath of Latin tradition. In 1946 one could already see what had happened. In Paris, at the Peace Conference in the Luxembourg Palace, the very last conference that brought official delegates from Eastern Europe to the West, the delegations from Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Poland had no other common language, even when speaking among themselves, than the accursed tongue of the common enemy. And what was true of this whole intelligentsia was, of course, doubly true of the professors of Marxist history, the indefatigable exegetes of the True Doctrine: they didn't have too much to say at the historical conference in Rome, but what they did say breathed the dust of the Marx-Engels Library of around 1900. "An Italian diplomat seated next to me," Herr Schmitz van Vorst recounts, "whispered in my ear: 'It is always claimed in Moscow that the Russians learn every language, but in the final analysis the only one they know is German.' . . . there were sessions [in which] one heard practically nothing but German, and an American scholar felt obliged to excuse himself for not knowing the language well enough. Thus the Congress gave an inadvertent reply to the question, What is Germany? Germany is neither the West nor the East, it is the middle, and mediates [between the two]. It was as if an axis were very naturally returned to its ancient sockets. . . ."

THERE was something of this underlying affinity between Germans and the East in the cordial and brutal frankness of the German-Russian talks at Moscow, with their alternation of quarrels, claspings to the bosom, and confessions. Khrushchev thought it necessary to warn the delegates against passions that were out of place in such debates—the only kind of passion exhibited during the many other conferences since the war had been a cold doctrinal one. Chancellor Adenauer himself went very far in two opposed directions. He dared raise a storm by recalling the atrocities of the Red Army along with those of the Nazis. But he also knew how to allude to the profundity of the Russian soul, so like that of the German. (This same man, as mayor of Cologne under the Weimar Republic, had been able to rouse the enthusiasm even of the Com-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

munist fraction on the Municipal Council for a very personal project, a suspension bridge over the Rhine, by invoking the memory of the beauty of the suspension bridges over the Neva in the fogs of St. Petersburg.) And he did not fail to inform Khrushchev that his, Adenauer's, great personal friend Pferdmenges, a banker of Cologne, was the nephew of none other than Friedrich Engels. In short, everyone felt at home.

So much blood had been spilled on both sides that a strange intimacy emerged, a kind of mutual and horrified respect: "In the two last world wars the greatest sacrifices were borne precisely by the Soviet and German peoples. The losses of these peoples ran to millions of human lives, and exceeded by many times the total losses borne by all the other countries that participated in the war." This echoed the Soviet note of invitation to the Chancellor, which repeated almost textually the words of Stalin's message of salutation in 1949 to the founders of the "Democratic Republic" of Pankow: "The experience of the last war has shown that it is the German and Soviet peoples who made the greatest sacrifices in this war and that these two peoples are endowed with the greatest possibility of accomplishing great deeds of worldwide scope. . . ." And, at bottom, of all the countries of the Continent it is only Germany that the Russians take seriously, whether as enemy or ally. For them, Germany never ceased to be the real stake of the cold war; she will not cease being the stake of the war of smiles.

ALL this is not easily expressed in political and diplomatic terms. In contrast to a common opinion, West Germany is not swarming with Machiavellis impatient for adventure, tempted by the idea of playing off foreign powers against each other, or by "national Bolshevism," or by a Greater Germany associated with an even Greater Russia. When Khrushchev talked to the Bonn delegation of Germany's vocation as a great world power, he got almost no echo in reply —or only a skeptical one. The Germans betrayed something more than the fear of a child whose fingers have been badly burned by power politics—and more than the resignation of complacent bourgeois. Tauroggen, Rapallo, all those nightmares of German-Russian collaboration haunting Western diplomacy today, were the work, on the German side, of professional military men and career diplomats of the same social extraction and belonging to the same tradition. Their kind is out of power today. The temptation to side with Russia is felt in Germany right now only by romantics still unawakened from dreams of "national greatness" and the "will to power"; it may exhilarate and uplift retired army officers, salon strategists, and the "idealists" of a deflated pan-Germanism, but it does not touch the industrialist, the trade unionist, or the mass of those Germans who, starting from the bottom in 1945, built themselves a bearable material life and have no desire to start all over again. Security, prosperity, decency, and even—let no one smile at this—liberty, *that* is the West. And besides, the Western powers have promised to do all that is possible to reunify Germany on the basis of full sovereignty, while the Russians, more explicit than ever, offer reunification only in partnership with Ulbricht, Pieck, and Grotewohl.

The cold shower came right after Chancellor Adenauer returned from Moscow. Twenty-four hours later Grotewohl turned up under the Kremlin's walls and received the same banquets and the same embraces. The future, of course, still belonged to Germany, but now it was the Germany of the "Popular Democracy" of Pankow.

OFFICIALLY, the reunification of Germany still heads the list of Western problems. But at bottom everybody agrees that the *détente* amounts to the consecration and, even more, refurbishing of the status quo. The *détente* does not mean solving the problems still open; it means leaving them unsolved and being reconciled to the fact. Real disarmament is perhaps impossible, and it will certainly take a long time to agree on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its terms, but a reduction of armaments is certainly taking place. The United States, without noise or fuss, has reduced her armed forces from 3,700,000 to 2,940,000 since 1954, and will reduce them to 2,280,000 by June of 1956. The Soviet Union did not fail to seize its chance to announce in its turn, and with the greatest possible fanfare, the reduction of its armies by 640,000 men —a reduction nobody can verify since the total figures for the armed forces of the Russians and their satellites is a state secret —but which may be regarded fairly probable in view of Russia's labor shortage. "Co-existence" is an urgent necessity for an economy that was getting winded in the cold war. And it also happens to be perfectly true that Russia wants to live in peace so that she can enjoy her possessions and her conquests. The formal guarantee of the present division of Europe, which, as Moscow sees it, the *détente* consecrates, will perhaps find its juridical form in a "pact for European security"; so far it has been a reality without such a pact.

The single and final stumbling block is German unity, which the West has inscribed on its banners. Well, it will go on being discussed, and after a while people will get tired of talking about it. Is the fate of the Saxons, the Brandenburgers, and the Prussians going to keep on troubling a world untroubled by the complete disappearance of the Baltic states and the enslavement of all Eastern Europe? It is significant that the neutral term, "reunification," which the Russians suggested, has discreetly replaced, even in the West, the free elections once insisted on so strongly; this may make it possible one fine day, after a period of decent transition, to "take into consideration the reality of the existence of the Democratic Republic of Pankow." In the meantime Russia has taken care to restore the luster of her "Democratic Republic" with a handsome treaty of friendship based on "an entire equality of rights, mutual respect for sovereignty, and non-interference in internal affairs," and it has granted the government of Pankow freedom to establish its own diplomatic relations, "including relations with the Federal German Republic." Already envisaging a fusion of the two present governments in Germany, rather than a unitary German regime established by free elections, the Pankow regime is dressed up as a "National Front." Ulbricht, following Adenauer to Moscow, was reminded by Comrade Khrushchev of something that he, like everybody else, had forgotten a little: that the government of East Germany was not a Communist but a coalition government, and that a coalition rested on "the necessity of reciprocal concessions."

THERE is only one error in the "neo-realism" that the West displays towards the *détente:* the Soviet Union is not interested in maintaining the status quo. The Westerners have placed their stamp of approval on the whole diplomatic vocabulary of the Soviets: "co-existence," *"détente,"* "security pact," "reunification." Westerners translate all this as the preservation of the status quo. But this term, at once disillusioning and reassuring, is precisely the one that does *not* appear in the Soviet vocabulary; you search for it in vain in all the mountains of paper and words produced by the Russians over almost forty years. Of course, the Russians do not want the present state of things to change to their own disadvantage. But, in contrast to so many Western politicians, they count on the passage of time and the "movement of history," on the ripening of circumstance and the rotting of men and of wills, to bring them what they want. If this were all that was left of their old apprenticeship in "historical materialism," it would still give them a very definite intellectual superiority over the "neo-realists" of the status quo. When Adenauer, arriving in Moscow, declared that what was most real in the "reality" of the division of Germany was the evident impossibility of letting such a state of things endure, the Soviet statesmen were doubtless in full accord with him; their sole disagreement concerned the direction of the desired evolution. They had, above all, the tranquil assurance of having more time be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fore them than the tenacious old man opposite. There was no hurry: at Geneva, Khrushchev, overflowing with joviality, kept on recalling the old Russian proverb: "He who lives will see."

The war of smiles permits one to look at things with serenity and patience. The Federal Republic is part of the Western alliance, which is a defensive one. But the alliance was formed against the Soviet bloc; hence, declared Khrushchev very sensibly, "We statesmen ought to do everything necessary to make it weaker and not stronger. This is a legitimate aim." But then he proceeded to say, without anxiety and without impatience: "To raise the question of the withdrawal of the German Federal Republic from NATO would be equally unrealistic. It would sound like an ultimatum on our part. We do not raise the question." He did not need to—other people will raise it for him, in every Western capital.

The Bundestag, after Adenauer's return from Moscow, thought it best to avoid any exhaustive debate. In the opinion of everyone—and for once even that of the Socialist opposition—this was not the moment to discuss alliances and the ways and means of getting out of them, nor the right time, on the eve of the October Conference of Foreign Ministers at Geneva, publicly to consider the "reality of Pankow." And besides, it was well understood that as long as "the old man" was around, Bonn could not consider leaving NATO or negotiating with the Pankow puppets.

One begins, however, to see on all sides, that the *détente* has nothing to do with a stabilization of the status quo; on the contrary, it was the cold war—which is to say, the organized resistance of the West—that best guaranteed the status quo, and it is the war of smiles that has started everything going again and called everything in question, including defensive alliances. Who needs alliances when tensions are lessening? The Federal Republic was a very stable fact in the cold war; with its back up against the Iron Curtain, tied to the West by the Atlantic Pact, it could not budge. But now the Federal Republic, too, has joined the game of co-existence. In the East the Iron Curtain has lifted, giving glimpses of forgotten landscapes that can make a German a little giddy; in the West there is always the Atlantic Pact, but there is also something of a military vacuum, which has become more of a vacuum than ever since France committed her forces in Africa. Of course, there is always the hope, now five years old, of setting up a German army, yet even Chancellor Adenauer, after his return from Moscow, with a hastiness that everyone thought suspect, tried to postpone the date of its rebirth. There is also the hope, which is even taken account of in the plans of the Allies, of a neutralized Germany. Certainly, this neutral Germany would have an army—but who finds that reassuring?

Adenauer's originality, as compared with the other statesmen of the West, consists in his seeming to be the only one of them never to have stopped being distrustful of the Germans—not of the German "soul" or of German "militarism," or of other such philosophical entities, but of the fundamental instability of a people established on the moving sands of a Central Europe already half-swallowed up by the Russian empire; of a nation whose national traditions have collapsed and that now lives on as an industrious and prosperous No Man's Land. And the Germans are distrustful enough of themselves, and of the fantastic contingencies of their situation, to be willing to follow Adenauer. His entire ambition was to give Germany, "while he was still there," a true and valid object of allegiance and loyalty in the reality of a united Europe ("that myth"), and to forge for her a federal bond strong enough to survive the fluctuations of cold war alliances. It is certainly too soon to say he has failed, but it is obvious that he has not succeeded. The Treaties of Paris and the Atlantic Pact are scarcely that bond. The *détente* has not been reassuring, particularly since Geneva, and people have begun to talk again of a "revival of Europe," but without anyone's knowing very well how it is to come about. So much time has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been taken up treating this as an idea to think about that it has degenerated into a slogan. Whatever prestige or force the slogan has left is about to be squandered in the ignominious contest over the Saar.

Germany, too, is now part of the game of co-existence, which is to say that her fate is once again in the balance. But there is no present danger that she will step through her new window on the East; the Russian conditions for German unification have been too clearly declared. Bonn is scarcely prepared to break all its alliances with the West and accept, as an equal partner, the Pankow regime with its "socialist conquests."

GERMANY'S reunification involves a game of patience that will probably take a very long time to play out, at least for those who calculate historical time in terms of legislatures or ministries. But Khrushchev is of the opinion that he can wait: "We'll get them by attrition." And he can wait all the more patiently since the prize in view for the Russians seems so great in relation to what they are risking in order to gain it. The most extreme hypothesis is that East Germany would leave the Eastern bloc; but it is doubtful whether this would upset the balance of power in the world, or even in Europe. Supposing, however, the contrary happened and that the Federal Republic left the Western system; it is enough to pick up a map of Europe and make a rapid calculation of forces to understand what this would mean.

The cold war, subtle minds told us, gave Germany and old Adenauer an importance they did not deserve. When the *détente* came, all this would disappear and one would finally be able to talk of other things. Well, the *détente* has come and the splintering and the cracking and the damage are even more general than one foresaw. In the cheery atmosphere of the war of smiles, Adenauer's bony face, to which a smile comes so painfully, stands out with depressing effect. If he does not bear the weight of the world on his shoulders, he is at least the only one to shoulder the heavy responsibility of that optimism with which, against his own wishes, a new and sovereign Germany, not subordinated to any European federation, has been established.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SELLING THE PRESIDENT TO THE PEOPLE

The Direct Democracy of Public Relations

DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

WE ARE slow to notice some of the most important events in recent history simply because they are among the last to be treated in formal historical literature. During the ten years since the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a whole library of autobiographical memoirs and political-historical and polemical writing has accumulated around him and the New Deal. Yet some of the greatest changes that took place in American political institutions during the period of FDR's ascendancy for the most part still go unchronicled because they remain peripheral to what we usually think of as political history. The story of these events exists only in fragmentary form, scattered through a few monographs, like James E. Pollard's *Presidents and the Press* (1947) or Frank Luther Mott's *News in America* (1952), which do not reach the general public, or implicit in handbooks like Charles F. Lindsley's *Radio and Television Communication* (1952) or Philip Lesly's *Public Relations Handbook* (1950), which tend to escape the historian's attention. Some of the events reported in these monographs and handbooks add up to epochal innovations.

FDR was our first "nationally advertised" President. The attitude of the vast majority of the American people to him was as different from that of their grandfathers to the Presidents of their day as our attitude to General Motors is different from that of our great-grandfathers to the village harness-maker. Like other "nationally advertised brands," FDR could not, of course, have been successful if he had not had something to offer. But would he have been able to sell himself to the American public—and on such a scale—without the benefit of certain technological changes in our systems of public communication?

DURING the 19th century the telegraph transformed American journalism. Until the 1830's—that is, until the coming of the telegraph—the reporting of political news in the United States was a bitterly partisan business. Newspapers were owned body and soul by one or another political party, and, generally speaking, lacked moderation, conscience, or decency. The practice of ignoring or misrepresenting the opposition's statements was pushed to a point unknown today even among the most partisan of our large daily papers. Not until the last years of the age of Jackson did news begin to be sold in the open market, and as it became a commodity its quality began to improve. And with the rise of the cheap newspaper—the "penny press" in those days—addressed to a vast audience, newspapers tended to become financially independent of political parties. The growing volume of advertising they carried further encouraged them to assert their political independence.

It was the telegraph, of course, that made possible the establishment of enterprises—the wire services—selling news to newspapers (the AP was founded in 1848), and these had a financial interest in seeing a crudely

---

PRESIDENT Eisenhower's illness has once again reminded us of the arduous responsibilities that invest his office. Here DANIEL J. BOORSTIN shows that public relations have grown over the last decades to be one of the chief, and least dispensable, of these. Mr. Boorstin is associate professor of American history at the University of Chicago and the author of three books: *The Mysterious Science of the Law, The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson,* and *The Genius of American Politics.* He is also a veteran contributor of articles and book reviews to these pages.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

partisan press supplanted by an independent one. The wire services sold a non-partisan product; very early they set a standard of impartial reporting that still distinguishes our press from that of most of the rest of the world.

Technical and economic developments made it possible to communicate news to more and more people more rapidly than ever before. The Fourdrinier machine for producing paper in a continuous strip instead of in sheets, and the Hoe presses, which by around 1900 could produce up to 144,000 sixteen-page newspapers per hour, acted as both cause and effect in making the news big business. By the turn of the century, major newspaper chains like Scripps's and Hearst's were going strong. The great rise in newspaper circulation set in soon after 1892; in that year there were only ten papers in four cities that had a circulation of over one hundred thousand; by 1914 there were over thirty of that size in a dozen cities. During this period, the average circulation of daily newspapers in the United States just about doubled. The combined circulation of daily newspapers in 1930 amounted to over forty-four million; by 1955 the figure was nearly fifty-five million.

To this growing business, the government, and especially the federal government in Washington, offered the richest single source of raw material. At the beginning of this century there were less than two hundred Washington correspondents. The number increased sharply during World War I, but even in 1929 the Washington press bureaus were only about a third their present size. Today about fifteen hundred people in Washington make their living directly from collecting and reporting national news.

We sometimes forget that the Presidential press conference is an institution of very recent date. Only fifty years ago there were no regularly scheduled news conferences at the White House. From time to time, President Theodore Roosevelt, while being shaved, would allow Lincoln Steffens to ask him questions; and he was the one who first provided a special anteroom for White House correspondents. Under President Wilson, something like the present formal and regular White House press conferences first came into being. Although interrupted by World War I, the institution was continued in one form or another by all Presidents after him. The figure any one of these cut in newspapers all over the country depended very much on how he "handled himself" during these periodic interviews. FDR was the first President to appoint a special press secretary.

By the early 20th century a continual, ever widening current of news was flowing from the White House. The news-gathering agencies themselves began to become self-appointed representatives of public opinion who put point-blank questions to the President, and from whom the President could learn what was troubling the public mind. Communication was now constant and two-way. No longer did the press await "statements" from the White House; it could prod the President when he was reticent, and focus attention on embarrassing questions. The corps of Washington correspondents became a more flexible, more regular, more direct, and at times more successful means than Congress itself of calling the President to public account.

THE new continuity, informality, and immediacy of relations between people and President were furthered by the radio, which, with catastrophic suddenness, became a major factor in American political life during the 20's. The first Presidential election whose results were publicly broadcast was that of November 2, 1920: between five hundred and one thousand Americans were wearing earphones on that night to learn whether Harding or Cox had been elected. By 1922 about four hundred thousand radio sets were in use in the United States; by 1928 the number had increased more than twenty-fold to eight and a half million; in 1932 to eighteen million; by 1936 to thirty-three million; and by 1950 to well over eighty million. It was in the elections of 1924, however, that the radio began to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

acquire real political significance; in that year, for the first time, the proceedings of the two national party conventions were broadcast to the public. But not until 1928 did the major parties make extensive use of the radio in their campaigning, when for the first time millions of Americans heard the candidates' voices in their own homes. The inauguration of President Hoover, on March 4, 1929, was broadcast over a network of one hundred twenty stations.

These and other changes still to come in American political life were, of course, intimately connected with the rising American standard of living. For the ever accelerating need to cultivate the market, to increase the wants of people, and to attract them to specific products, was served by both press and radio. Advertising had begun to become big business by about the 1880's, but only in the last fifty years has its growth been spectacular. Until about 1890 most dailies still received more revenue from the sale of papers than from advertising; by 1914 advertising was providing many with two-thirds of their income, by 1929 with three-fourths. The bills that advertising clients received from radio stations amounted only to about five million dollars in 1927; the sum shot up to over one hundred and seven millions in 1936; by 1945 it was nearly four hundred and eighty millions; and in 1949 had increased by nearly another third, to the phenomenal figure of six hundred and thirty-seven millions. Advertising agencies in the United States, which handled a business of nearly six hundred million dollars in 1930, had an annual business in the neighborhood of a billion dollars about fifteen years later.

It is not surprising that the self-conscious and scientific study of public opinion, which was to become important in national political calculations by mid-century, had its roots in the efforts of advertisers to evaluate the reach of their advertising dollars. The first public opinion surveys were made by advertising managers to discover who was reading their copy. In 1919 there appeared the first survey department within an advertising agency, and the first independent surveying agency. It was not until 1935, however, that the representative sample method was used in public opinoin surveys. In July of that year—in the middle of FDR's first administration—Elmo Roper published his first survey in *Fortune;* a few months later Dr. George Gallup began releasing his surveys as director of the American Institute of Public Opinion.

During this very period, a new philosophy and science of public opinion came into being. Walter Lippmann's *Public Opinion* (1922)—soon followed by his *Phantom Public* (1925)—advanced the important idea of "stereotypes" and explored some theoretical consequences of the new publicity. For the citizen was now becoming more and more like the customer. With characteristic American directness, a new profession of "public relations" developed. The anti-big business sentiment of the 1880's and 1890's and the rise of muckraking had disposed big business men to offer high priecs for skillful press-agentry. Ivy Lee, by paying some attention to the public interest and to the legitimate curiosity of newspaper reporters, helped put this new activity on a respectable (and profitable) footing. "This profession," observed Edward L. Bernays in the foreword to his *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923), "in a few years has developed from the status of circus agent stunts to . . . an important position in the conduct of the world's affairs."

By the time that Franklin Delano Roosevelt came into office on March 4, 1933, technological and institutional innovations had in many ways prepared the way for a transformation of the relation between President and people. Communications from the President to the reading or listening public, which formerly had been ceremonial, infrequent, and addressed to small audiences, could now be constant, spontaneous, and directed to all who could read or hear (sometimes whether they wished to or not). And now through the questions put to the President at his regular press conferences, and through the telegrams and mail received after his radio addresses or public statements,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he could sense the temper and gauge the drift of public opinion—he could find out what the sovereign people wanted. He could even send up trial balloons to get some advance idea of public response to his future decisions. The President was no longer simply dealing with the "people," but with "public opinion."

THERE is no denying that FDR possessed a genius for using these new means of communication. Without them he could hardly have developed that novel intimacy between people and President which marked his administrations. In the little memorial miscellany published by Pocket Books on April 18, 1945 (less than a week after FDR's death), we read in Carl Carmer's verse dialogue:

Woman:
. . . Come home with me
If you would think of him. I never saw him—
But I knew him. Can you have forgotten
How, with his voice, he came into our house,
The President of these United States,
Calling us friends. . . .
Do you remember how he came to us
That day twelve years ago—a little more—
And you were sitting by the radio
(We had it on the kitchen table then)
Your head down on your arms as if asleep.

For the first time in American history the voice of the President was a voice from kitchen tables, from the counters of bars and lunchrooms, and the corners of living rooms.

FDR's relaxed and informal style, both in writing and speaking, enabled him to make the most of the new informal circumstances under which people heard him. That he was compelled by his infirmity to sit while giving his radio talks only added to the informality. A whole world separates FDR's speeches from those of his immediate predecessors—from the stilted rhetoric of the oratory collected in such volumes as Calvin Coolidge's *Foundations of the Republic* (1926) or Herbert Hoover's *Addresses Upon the American Road* (1938). Earlier Presidential speeches had too often echoed the style and sentiments of commencement addresses; FDR could say something informal and concrete even in such an unpromising State Paper as a "Mother's Day Proclamation."

Perhaps never before had there been so happy a coincidence of personal talent with technological opportunity as under his administrations. In the eight volumes of the *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt,* which cover the era of the New Deal, we discover two new genres of political literature which were the means by which a new relationship between President and people was fashioned. The first genre was established in transcriptions of Presidential press conferences; the second, in FDR's radio talks, the "fireside chats." Both are distinguished by an engaging casualness and directness; but this is not all that makes them new genres in the literature of American politics. Here, for the first time among Presidential papers, we find an extensive body of public utterances that are unceremonial yet serious.

Only a year after FDR assumed office, Theodore G. Joslin, who had handled press relations for President Hoover, observed that President Roosevelt had already come nearer than any of his predecessors "to meeting the expectations of the four hundred men and women who, in these times of stress, write half a million words a day to bring to our firesides news of developments at the seat of the Government." FDR had already shown the cameraderie and the willingness to make news which made some correspondents (not always his political friends) call his administration a "new deal for the press." The unprecedented frequency of his press conferences established a continuity of relations with both correspondents and the reading public. During Hoover's administration there had been only sixty-six Presidential press conferences; but FDR held three hundred thirty-seven press conferences during his first administration, and three hundred seventy-four during his second. Thus, while Hoover met the press on an average of less than once in every three weeks, Roosevelt

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would see them about five times in that same period. The record of his conferences shows how this frequency bred intimacy, informality, and a set of institutionalized procedures; before long the spirit of those press conferences became on both sides much like that of any other responsible deliberative body.

Similarly, the frequency with which the President went on the air effected a revolutionary change. Between March and October 1933, FDR gave four "fireside chats." Through these, for the first time in American history, a President was able to appeal on short notice and in his own voice to the whole constituency. Neither the press conference nor the "fireside chat" was an occasion for *ex cathedra* pronouncements. On the contrary, they were designed to stimulate a more active "dialogue" between the people and the Chief Executive.

Perhaps the best index of the effect of FDR's radio talks was the volume of White House mail. In McKinley's time Presidential mail amounted to about a hundred letters a day, which were handled by a single clerk. Despite occasional flurries at inaugurations or crises, the daily flow remained small. Not until President Hoover's time did its volume increase significantly. Even then letters sometimes did not number more than a few hundred a day, and the system of handling them remained unchanged. Under FDR, however, Presidential mail acquired a new and unprecedented volume, as we learn from the reminiscences of Ira R. T. Smith, for many years chief Presidential mail clerk (*"Dear Mr. President . . .": The Story of Fifty Years in the White House Mail Room*):

> Mr. Roosevelt always showed a keen interest in the mail and kept close watch on its trend. Nothing pleased him more than to know that I had to build up a big staff and often had to work until midnight to keep up with a run of 5000 to 8000 letters a day, and on some occasions many more thousands. He received regular reports. . . . Whenever there was a decrease in the influx of letters we could expect to hear from him or one of his secretaries, who wanted to know what was the matter—was the President losing his grip on the public?

Before FDR came to the White House, Mr. Smith had handled all the mail by himself. But when, in response to his First Inaugural Address, FDR received over four hundred fifty thousand letters, it was plain that a new era had begun. During certain periods as many as fifty persons were required to open and sort the White House mail; before long an electric letter-opener was installed, and instead of the old practice of counting individual pieces of mail, Mr. Smith and his helpers began measuring stacked-up letters by the yard.

Also, a new self-consciousness governed FDR's communications to the public; the era of "public relations" had begun. It was not enough that the President (or someone else for him) should state what he really believed—one had to consider all the "angles." Andrew Jackson had had his Amos Kendall and his Frank Blair; and it had not been uncommon for Presidents to employ ghost writers and close personal advisers who, in some cases, were responsible for both style and content. But perhaps never before did a President depend so consistently and to such an extent in his literary product on the collaboration of advisers. Among FDR's speech-writers were men like Harry Hopkins, Robert Sherwood, Samuel Rosenman, Stanley High, Charles Michelson, Ernest Lindley, Sumner Welles, Raymond Moley, Rexford Tugwell, Archibald MacLeish, Tom Corcoran, Basil O'Connor, and Robert Jackson—and these are only a few. FDR's speeches, even the most important and those seemingly most personal, were as much a cooperative product as a piece of copy produced by a large advertising agency. The President's genius consisted very much in his ability to give calculated, pre-fabricated phrases an air of casualness. It was, of course, remarkable that his speeches retained any personal flavor at all. And it was significant that this collaborative literary activity was not kept secret. The public began to take it as much for granted that the utterances of a President should be a composite product as that an advertisement of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Ford Motor Company should not be written by Henry Ford.

In the longer perspective of American history, these changes that FDR, aided by technology, brought about in the conduct of the Presidency may become permanent and take on the quality of mutations:

1. *The decline in the periodicity of American political life.* In the early years of the Republic, politics—or at least national politics—was a "sometime thing." Political interest would rise to fever pitch before national elections or in times of crisis, and tend to subside in between. The very vastness of the country reinforced this tendency to periodicity in American political life. And so our elections became notorious for their barbecue, holiday atmosphere: brief but hectic interruptions of the routine of life.

But the technological developments which I have described increased the President's opportunity, and eventually his need, to make news. Now headlines could be produced at an hour's notice. To oblige the correspondents by making big stories frequently, and small stories constantly, became part of his job. In FDR's era, of course, the crises in economic life and international affairs were themselves rich raw material for the press. There had been crises and wars before, but never before had so large and steady a stream of announcements, information, "statements to the press," and description of "problems facing the country" poured from the headquarters of government. The innocent citizen now found no respite from this barrage of politics and government. Even over a beer at his faborite bar he was likely to hear the hourly news broadcast, or the very voice of his President.

The citizen was no longer expected to focus his attention only temporarily on a cluster of issues (conveniently dramatized by two rival personalities) at the time of national election. With the rise of the weekly news magazine (*Time* was founded in 1923, *Newsweek* in 1938), of news quizzes, news broadcasts, and radio forums, the citizen was given a new duty, that of being "well informed." The complex of alphabetical agencies, the intricate and remote problems of foreign policy, and the details of the legislative process came now, as never before, to burden his mind and plague his conscience. Whether or not the American citizen was consciously becoming more "political," he was surely finding it more and more difficult to escape politics. No longer was he granted the surcease of inter-election periods when his representatives were left to their own devices and he could turn to other things. Paradoxically, in spite of the great increase in population, the national government was becoming less and less republican, and more and more democratic; for elected officials were now in more constant touch with their constituencies.

2. *Increased communication between the people and the President.* The very agencies that the President was now using to communicate his views to the public were also employed to elicit the public's response. Letters to the President—and to Congressmen—became a special American version of the ancient right of petition. As communications to public officials multiplied, the temptations increased for the public official, and especially the President, to trim his sails to the shifting winds of opinion, which now sometimes blew with hurricane force into Washington offices. The weak representative or the demagogue would find it easier to be weak and yet to seem to be strong by following the majority view at every turn. Here was still another force to prevent the realization of Burke's ideal of the independent representative, and to make him a "mere" spokesman of popular views.

3. *The decline of naivety.* The efflorescence of "public relations" techniques and of opinion polls increased the temptation for the President to rely on experts in dealing with the public. Even if Presidential utterances would still have the appearance of casualness, it would be a studied casualness, or one that the people would suspect of being studied. The President would scrutinize surveys of press opinions; he would employ (sometimes within the very agencies of government) specialists in "opinion re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

search" to inform him of what the people liked or disliked. In these ways, the citizen was more and more assimilated to the customer; he had to be "approached," his responses had to be measured so that he could be given what he wanted, or thought he wanted.

4. *The inversion of geographic and political distances.* The new developments in communications made many of the oldest assumptions about the relations between geography and politics irrelevant. Jefferson and his "States Rights" disciples had started from the axiom that the citizen's knowledge and hence his capacity for an informed opinion were in inverse ratio to his geographic distance from the headquarters of decision. The closer he was to the scene, the more he would presumably know, and the more exact would be his knowledge. Thus the average citizen was expected to be best informed about the political affairs of his municipality, only a little less informed about those of his state, and considerably less informed about the affairs of the nation as a whole. The changes that reached their climax under FDR not only exploded this assumption, they came close to making it the reverse of the truth. Both the multiplication of newscasts and the expansion of the profession of radio news-commentator focused attention on national events—since these were sure to interest the largest number of listeners; and audience volume decided where money was to be invested in communications. National affairs became more and more a good thing for the commercial sponsors of newscasts. Inevitably, many of the ablest reporters, too, were attracted to the national capital. The citizen, when he listened to the news from Washington, now had the benefit of sophisticated, well-informed, and competent interpreters who seldom had equals in the state capitals or on the local scene.

There thus developed a new disparity between the quality and quantity of information about national as contrasted with state or local matters. By about 1940, largely owing to the press and the radio, the citizenry had clearly reached a point where it was better informed about national than about local issues. This reversal of a long-standing assumption, which was not just a result of the marked increase in federal activities under the New Deal, would require revision of accepted notions about federalism, and about the competence of the average citizen to participate in government.

WE ARE already far enough from the age of FDR to begin to see that the tendencies which I have just described were not ephemeral. American experience under FDR created new expectations that continue to clamor for fulfillment. When we look on into the administrations of Truman and Eisenhower, we see that these expectations became institutionalized. FDR had set a style that later Presidential candidates could only at their peril violate. President Truman's success and the defeat of Governor Dewey in the 1948 elections cannot be explained unless such novel factors are taken into account. The growth of television, and its frequent (and on the whole successful) use by President Eisenhower, only carry further the tendencies initiated in the age of FDR. While later Presidents might lack the vividness of FDR's personality, perhaps never again would any man attain the Presidency or discharge its duties satisfactorily without entering into an intimate and conscious relation with the whole public. This opens unprecedented opportunities for effective and enlightening leadership. But it also opens unprecedented temptations. For never before has it been so easy for a statesman to seem to lead millions while in reality tamely echoing their every shifting mood and inclination.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE OTHERS

A Story of North Africa

ALFRED MEMMI

AT LONG last we removed the iron bars and came out of our barricaded houses. The streets were somnolent after our sleepless nights, the air tasted of ash, and a weird yellow light flashed through purple clouds and lit up our tired faces. A few useless and indifferent patrols of Negro soldiers ambled around. Occasionally, the police also showed up—when everything was over. Our main thirst was easily quenched as uncertain and contradictory bits of news poured in. Bissor was among the dead. About the corpses there could be no doubt. There was no possible mistake: Bissor was dead, and all his family had been murdered, except the prostitute sister who had been lucky enough to be away in Marseille. I am sure that Bissor had fought back wildly with his big hard fists. As for the rest, will we ever be able to understand? It was said that the Moslem infantry had been called to the front and that, before being shipped off to slaughter, they had felt, as warriors for whom all is right, that they could get away with anything. Tradition admitted that they could rob, rape, or kill as they pleased. Of course, they chose to descend on the Jewish quarter. Others maintained that the pogrom had been fomented by the government, as a trick to divert attention from its political difficulties, and that all the Jewish soldiers had received orders to remain in their barracks. The coincidence indeed seemed incredible. Perhaps the disaster, after all, had started in some silly way, with a quarrel between a Jewish shopkeeper and an Arab customer in a town of the South; it had then led to a fight between the Moslems of the neighborhood and any passing Jews, and had spread from there to neighboring towns, finally setting the whole country ablaze.

Without knowing why, the city had been simmering for several days. We avoided leaving our own street, and all intercourse was reduced to a cautious politeness. Each little group kept to itself. At home, we were worried, but we insisted on believing that times had changed as we repeated old tales—not so old after all—about Jews having their throats cut by nearby wells, being walled up alive by princely creditors, or sadistically raped. Little by little, in spite of ourselves, we regressed into the historical darkness of bygone ages, of blind brutality. When the storm broke out we were already certain of our inevitable fate.

At eleven in the morning, my father rushed home in spite of his asthma, carrying an armful of provisions, including meats and sugar. Usually, he lunched in his store, but it was said that fights had already started not far from the ghetto. My mother ran to the grocer's just as the store was closing down. Then we barricaded our doors and windows, the front door with two bars of wrought

---

WE PRESENT here a different—yet not so different—aspect of Jewish life in North Africa than that reported on elsewhere in this same issue by Hal Lehrman. This is a chapter from an autobiographical first novel that caused something of a sensation in Parisian literary circles when it appeared in its original French several years ago. It has just been published in this country (by Criterion Books), in a translation by Edouard Roditi (who is known to our readers). ALFRED MEMMI was born in Tunis on December 15, 1920, and spent his youth there. During the war he was, as a Jew, put into a forced-labor camp in Algeria, from which he soon managed to escape. He went to Paris after the peace, and took a degree in philosophy from the Sorbonne. Since October 1949 he has been teaching school in his native Tunis and devoting himself to work in social psychology. His second novel, *Agar,* has just been brought out in France.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

iron. After that, we sat and listened for any unusual sounds. But we were far from the ghetto and could only study the deathly silence of our own neighborhood, periodically broken by the rattling noise of empty streetcars. My father had an occupation for such stay-in periods: he then made heavy canvas feed-bags for horses. From time to time, he dropped his work and rushed to the window. As he grew paler, I recognized on his face the marks of the terror which he had transmitted to me in my earliest childhood. Will I ever be able to rid myself of that cold clamminess at the back of my neck, and of the absurd feeling of being paralyzed and disarmed in the face of a humiliating death?

It was in high school that I discovered how painful it is to be a Jew. Until then, the world had been alien to me, hostile of course, but no more so than anything unknown. I was not the cause of my own suffering, I did not feel alien to myself as I do today. Can I make myself more clear? Anti-Semitism seemed to be a characteristic of the others, much as they might have a way of speaking or of dressing. They were not Jews, as I was, so they were anti-Semites. Naturally, it was not very pleasant, but no less so than the brutality of Sicilians or the prerogatives of the French. It did not fit any particular characteristic of my own, for I did not feel Jewish in any way that might provoke anti-Semitism. In short, I felt neither accused nor guilty.

In high school, I began to suffer because they forced me to ask myself what I was. This problem never could have arisen at the Alliance [Israélite] school where we had all been Jews, all but a tiny minority which had soon been reduced to discretion. But in high school a constant flow of remarks made me ponder the problem of the ideal Jew and forced me to study myself in order to discover in me the typical characteristics. Such introspection calls up ghosts, and through sheer rebelliousness, I defended my own ghosts and thus assured them an existence of their own. I, an artisan's son and poor, defended merchants and financiers in the presence of non-Jews, trying to explain historically why some Jews went into trade as though I had personally been responsible for Jewish trade and believed that non-Jewish trades were indeed more acceptable. As I condemned Jewish trade, I attacked it in the face of Jews, too, but far more virulently than the anti-Semites did and more openly.

This insidious and argumentative form of racial prejudice, disguised as objectivity, was tolerated by my upper-middle-class Jewish classmates. It is true that they were spared certain humiliations. They were assured that such criticism did not apply to them. Anyway, doesn't every human community have its faults? Apparently, I was too touchy and saw anti-Semitism everywhere. But the point was that my classmates did not suffer enough from it in material terms. There were, of course, little annoyances sometimes in the street. On a peaceful day, for instance, a drunkard might shout: "Death to the Jews!" Or the ticket-collector, harassed by the crowd, might say: "These Jews are all alike." Or inscriptions might be scrawled every once in a while on the walls of the old cemetery: "Down with the Jews!" Or again, uncomplimentary references might appear in the press, and one would then have to face smiling and unexpected remarks such as: "Really, you must admit that. . . ." But as, in the long run, the families of my classmates were allowed to go about their own business, they were convinced they were on the winning side. They did not even seem to experience any spiritual anxiety. They were of European culture, going back at least one generation, and the nearness of Europe and the apparent solidarity of the modern world comforted them; several times a year they went abroad, pampered their digestive systems in various spas, and did most of their business with European firms. . . .

I was neither as polite nor as secure as my middle-class brethren. I was impulsive and badly behaved, and allowed neither jokes nor mealy-mouthed insinuations to be made. I am willing to admit that my anxiety

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

often increased my suspicion, and I frequently suspected people of meaning more than they said; but what they said was quite unbearable enough for any ordinary pride, and I had the greatest contempt for my Jewish classmates, for their tolerance and so-called fair play, as if fair play did not imply equality for both players.

One day, and I recall it with terror, my exasperation almost made me lose my head. We were climbing the steps to the new science wing in our school. Behind me, I could hear a political discussion between Dunand, one of the few French Socialists in our class, and Papachino, a French boy of Italian origin. Those whose naturalization is recent or whose family background is vague are always more involved in race prejudice and more nationalistic than others. I detested Papachino, with his head that leaned over on one shoulder, and his yellow face full of a snarling craftiness. Although the discussion was violent, I was not paying much attention to it, until suddenly the word Jew struck my ear. I might be anywhere in the world, surrounded by respect and confidence and enjoying every honor, but the slippery sound of the word would still make me prick up my ears and listen. Papachino's bitter, whining voice concluded:

"It is they who are ruining France."

In a second, I had whipped around and grabbed him by the neck with my tense fingers. I was two steps above him, and my rigid fist forced him to look up as I strangled him in his own shirt collar:

"Repeat that! Repeat it, and I'll throw you over the railing."

He hesitated, wondering whether to take it as a joke or to be angry.

"Say it again," I repeated, furious.

Around us, everything had stopped. The look on my face could not have been very reassuring. From above, I could see Papachino's eyes rolling in his motionless face as he tried to measure the fall in the stairwell. He must also have felt the trembling of my hand around his neck, as I could too, and he muttered:

"You're mad . . . you're mad. . . ."

I let go, suddenly afraid myself; my fear was greater than my anger. Dunand had said nothing during all this scene. I only noticed the color come back to his cheeks as he smiled and said, at last:

"Chicken shit!"

Papachino was stammering, trying to explain what he had meant and what he had not. I turned my back on him and went on up the stairs, without quite understanding my sudden exasperation.

But, I could not be continually defending myself against the constant hostility and slyness, the very atmosphere of the place. Every time a native, whether Jewish or Moslem, said something silly, our mathematics teacher, a fat and placid Alsatian, would declare in a radio announcer's voice: "This is the Voice of Africa calling!" He thought he was funny, and the Europeans laughed noisily while the others smiled to show their willingness to play the game. We would then stare at each other and swallow our pride.

The history teacher, a retired lieutenant with a wooden left leg which thumped on the floor with a martial sound, would slyly imply: "The destruction of French hierarchy and of its traditional values." I did not even quite know what he meant, but he managed to make us Africans loathe all hierarchies and their values. Every morning he would force us to stand at attention and to say: "His Majesty the King of England," or "His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales," which made me link race prejudice with authority in my aversions. . . .

The fact that the same contempt was felt for Mohammedans made me feel a sense of community with them. Anxiously, my eyes would sometimes scan the class for allies and would catch the gaze of a young Moslem bourgeois by the name of Ben Smaan. But I felt that such a gulf separated us Jewish boys from our Moslem classmates, and that the impetus that bore me toward the West was so strong, that these encounters could be but accidents. I believed, firmly but not very clearly, that our future lay with Europe.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Two inconceivable acts of treachery on the part of the West were necessary before I ceased to associate my life too closely with it. By then, however, I had already broken with the East too.

Life in school slowly taught me my exact position, making the picture clearer each year. Our Alsatian teacher was an example of ordinary anti-Semitism arising from incompatibility. As a man of the North, he disliked living on the Mediterranean, and he reproached us with liking all the things he detested such as speaking loud, or living on the streets, or being sunburnt, whereas his complexion was milky-white. . . . Another historian also tried to give race prejudice a scientific basis. What complexes drove him to devote his doctoral dissertation and many years of his life to nonsensical gossip? He forced himself to demonstrate his theories calmly, without ever raising his voice. Years later, he was to betray his secret violence when, with unexpected audacity in such a silent man, soft and almost an invalid, he became a leader in Franco-Nazi collaboration.

But his classes were carefully prepared and intelligent, so that they did me more harm than any stupid or aggressive jokes. I respected all that seemed scientifically accurate, and because I found no immediate reply to his arguments, they troubled me and made me feel guilty. To combat this, I threw myself into studies of Judaism and became intellectually aware of our own Hebrew spiritual tradition. For a few years I enthusiastically attended any lecture or meeting which could help me in these investigations; then firmly entrenched within my new knowledge, I tried to undermine as best I could the teachings of this doctrinaire racial theorist in the minds of my school-fellows. But they all laughed at my discoveries, much as they also derided what our teacher said. So I resorted to my usual vengeance. As he had at least the tact to allow us to express contrary views, whether he liked it or not, I was his best pupil, and I remember well writing angry sixteen-page compositions for him.

But this was impossible with Murat, whom we nicknamed the sprinkler because he constantly spat as he spoke. He was an old crank who was a good example of the kind of anti-Semitism that is bred of stupidity. His mere physical appearance repelled me, with his rotting and uneven yellow teeth, the deposit of thick foaming saliva in the corners of his mouth, his colorless and lifeless hair, and the eternal moist cigarette stub which made him blink with its smoke. He allowed no discussion and, being mean and grumpy, took petty revenge on any obstinate contradictors, that is on the few pupils who thought at all. The others laughed at him and teased him with excessive humility, and this seemed to flatter him. When he was exasperated he would relieve himself by insulting them grossly. On the whole, however, they got on well together. On days when his temper was good he would leave his desk and, putting his left foot up on a bench, would rest his chin on his hand and his elbow on his knee; it was time for a more intimate exchange of views. As he spat over the more unfortunate pupils who sat in the front row, he would ask seemingly innocent questions which were intended to make us reveal our most secret faults. Why was it that, in this country, the Jews always mentioned the profession of the deceased in death notices? He pretended not to know the reason, but he smiled knowingly: simply because Jews make the most—even of death—to advertise! But his stupidity went hand in hand with his greed, and my comrades learned to play the dirty trick of giving him presents. He was so grateful, it seemed, that he would even go so far as to hint at the subject of our next composition, without compromising himself, of course, but with much winking and subtle smiling:

"You would do well to work on Louis XIV. Most important, Louis XIV, most important!" . . .

MURAT used the same tactics against the Moslems, and my year in his class really brought me together with Ben Smaan. Murat maintained that Moslems had a par-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ticular smell of their own, and he explained it by saying that it came from the sweat caused by eating too much rancid mutton fat. Then he would direct the discussion toward the second statement which, he hoped, would make us forget the first. He was so clever! And the same pupils laughed, and the same ones were angry, all behaving like good sports. Every dog had his day, fair and fair enough. The day Ben Smaan asked if it was true that the Chinese thought that Europeans stank, I seconded him.

Politically, Murat was naturally a legitimist Royalist. It is odd how many [French] history teachers are Royalists, as though their studies commit them to a past world. Being a Royalist seemed to me to be the height of anachronistic absurdity. Ben Smaan was the son of a merchant who had been accidentally killed by a bullet in one of the periodic riots which upset our country, yet he was one of the few Moslems to attend Socialist youth meetings. In his composition on the consequences of the Revolution of 1789, he had dared to approve the Revolution itself. Murat gave him D, and in his report on it later in front of a silent class, told him his essay had been full of as much nonsense as its author. Ben Smaan was a fat boy who moved awkwardly, and he proceeded to take this very badly and to interrupt the solemn routine of this session by protesting that his grade was unjustified and that he had not written nonsense; if he had, it would interest him to hear more specifically what was wrong. The class was always on the lookout for a row and now began to shout: "The nonsense! The nonsense!" to the popular tune of "To the Lamppost!"

Murat became irritated, fussed through the essay, and at last found what had made him angry enough to grade it so low. Ben Smaan had written of the "admirable" Robespierre and the "Age of the Enlightenment" when the one was branded in our class as the most bloodthirsty of tyrants and the other as the darkest period in the history of France. This quarrel did not concern me personally, but Murat's injustice and the solidarity that I wished to express toward Ben Smaan as well as the huge admiration I felt for the French Revolution, perhaps also the expectation that I too would get an unfair grade, made me intervene impulsively and brutally, as always when justice seemed to me in danger.

"A gang of degenerate bandits, and the most shameful period in the history of France," Murat repeated firmly.

"The most generous and the most honorable!" I shouted.

My voice came from the back of the classroom and was veiled with emotion in spite of myself.

"Who shouted?" he asked, surprised and angry.

"I did!" I replied in the same passionate tone that revealed that I was ready for anything. My intention to provoke him was obviously insolent. Usually, the pupils took advantage of the slightest chance to laugh and imitate animal cries. Murat would then treat them as idiots and pretend to be angry while the class laughed all the more at his tenderness toward his pupils. This time, however, they all felt that something uncommon had occurred and, in their surprise, were silent. Murat, for once, was up against a real show of fervor and no longer knew what to answer. He merely muttered:

"All right, all right, shut up!"

He then quickly went on to criticize the next composition.

Ben Smaan smiled at me and waved his plump hand. I realized I had been fortunate. Murat had not insisted. Had he not retreated, I would never have been able to control myself.

DURING the recess, Ben Smaan joined me and said he wished to talk with me alone. I said I was prepared to listen, but he frowned with his eyes almost closed in his broad face and said mysteriously that he would rather we went somewhere out of the way. So we made a date to meet in town. He then told me he was the local secretary of a political youth movement composed only of native Africans and asked me to join

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it. I was delighted but a little embarrassed. Of course, I suffered from my growing awareness that I was alien in the eyes of Europeans, but it had not yet occurred to me to make a move toward the Moslems, for I thought of this road as closed.

"Precisely," said Ben Smaan. "That is something new in our program: we would like to have some Jews too, so as to express the aspirations of the whole Tunisian nation."

"But are we a part of the nation?"

"Of course you are! Where was your father born? And your grandfather? Have you ever had any other nationality in the last few centuries? No! There you are!"

"It's true," I said, "that I was born here, like my father and all my ancestors, and I've never been out of this country since my birth. You consider that we belong to the same nation, but what about the others, Ben Smaan, what about the others? I'm afraid that, to them, we may still be foreigners."

"Maybe the times have changed. But there's a job for those of us who know how to speak and explain and convince. We must promote unity among all the native sons of the country and make them act according to their own conscience. Why should we do without the help of the Jews, who are an important part of the population and a particularly active, clever, and powerful one?"

The last part of this sentence did not please me. What could he mean by "clever and powerful"? I preferred to think that his words had been tactlessly chosen.

"I can only agree, but I must admit that I am a pessimist. One cannot force oneself to be accepted as a relative or even a neighbor. That is the opinion of many Jews for whom the only solution is Zionism."

He stopped me with both hands and a scornful expression on his mouth that was as small as his eyes; he curled his lips to express his indignation and disagreement.

"Zionism! Leave that alone! It's a utopia and one that will arouse the whole Arab world. What could a handful of madmen do against the whole Arab world? No, let us put aside what would split us apart and look only to what can bring us together."

I did not know then what to think of Zionism, but such a rapid condemnation hurt me, and the implied threat particularly shocked me. Nevertheless, I felt that Ben Smaan's advances and generosity were sincere. His contact with the Socialist youth movement had given him a broad-minded humanism and the idea of the necessity of a social as well as a political liberation. He realized that the local middle class had exactly the same appetites as all others of its kind and that there would come a day when it would have to be fought too. He had left the Socialists now that he saw that the local groups of the European parties could find neither response nor roots in the native population. The people of Tunisia needed their own party to fight for them and to express their own aspirations. Ben Smaan spoke with a confident faith in his mission that I envied. He knew the sufferings of his people and was working to alleviate them. He seemed to be in the right and his task was obvious. But what was my people? And what did it want? My violence in the discussion and my resistance melted to indecision and a feeling of not belonging anywhere when it came to action.

"You know what you are and what you want. You're lucky. If you were asked point-blank what your main political aim is, you would say the withdrawal of the European colonials or at any rate their neutralization. But I have to stop and think. You very much want a return to the culture and language of the Arabs, but I now belong to Western culture and would be incapable of writing or expressing myself satisfactorily in Arabic. Still, the injustices and refusals of the West. . . ."

"But that only makes our task more urgent," Ben Smaan insisted. "The more time we let pass, the more unlike ourselves we become. We must pull ourselves together and clearly define our program."

I was too shy to add that Moslem hostility would have to be dispelled and that there was also the hostility of the Jews who had

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been driven behind thick walls by centuries of fear. This reminded me of my never concluded argument with my father:

"They don't like us," he would say bitterly.

"And do you like them?"

"Why should I like people who hate me?"

"Well, someone has to start. . . . "

My father would shrug his shoulders. . . .

But one had to forget and act. Only action could deliver both sides from their mutual isolation.

It was then only a few weeks before our school certificate examinations, and soon we would be distracted from these problems by reviewing. Ben Smaan was again on duty with me as a boarding-school prefect. I decided to go with him. . . .

There were not many of us at these secret meetings, and we felt strongly even if we had no very definite ideas. But I always left this Arab house filled with warmth and a feeling of generosity. The communion which ten of us could achieve was of good augury for the rest of the city. I smiled at the little street vendors and was amiable to the ticket-collector in the streetcar; when two women began to argue, I sided with the Moslem one. But the vendors did not understand my smiles, the ticket-collector hardly returned my politeness, and the Moslem women formed such a solid bloc in their opposition to the Jewess that I ended up by feeling sorry for her as the victim. Perhaps, I thought, if they only knew that I had just left an Arab home in the middle of the Halfaouine section, with a fig tree growing in the middle of the patio, and that I had just drunk tea there with Ben Smaan and the others, if only they knew that I was working for them, who I was and what I thought. . . . But I had to overcome the hostility of the ticket-collector and teach the shopkeepers not to insult Jewish housewives by calling them bitches, and I had to send Jewish and Moslem girls to the same schools. Our success depended on our work and patience and on time. . . .

After the pogrom, however, as soon as it was again possible to move around, Ben Smaan came to see me. We went for a long walk all around the old ramparts, with me slowing my impatient gait to keep pace with his small unsteady steps. He talked a lot, perhaps to hide his own embarrassment and emotion, and I said almost nothing, not knowing what to say. He had worried about my personal safety but, even more, he admitted, about what I might think, and he now apologized for his doubts. He was sure that I had realized that it had all been cooked up. Yes, I had. It must be explained to all in our respective religious communities. Yes, certainly. (Would mine believe me, I wondered?) It was more than ever necessary to be united. Yes, it was. (I was sick of those nightmarish nights!) He was preparing a petition. Yes, I would sign it.

Bissor was dead: what was I to do about this death? Whether it was a miserable European diversionary move or a spontaneous and blind mob action, no amount of research into responsibilities would ever bring him back to life. Ben Smaan was right: one had to educate the mob, unmask those who fooled it, and draw attention to the real problems. But I was tired and the results were too far off. For the moment I stood between two walls: how was I to choose between repulsive hypocritical anti-Semitism, which had probably been the instigator of the massacre, and these murderous explosions which, like letting blood, periodically relieved the pressure of so much accumulated hatred?

How vain and futile are all theoretical and philosophical constructions of the mind when compared to the brutal realities of the world of men! The European philosophers build the most rigorous and virtuous moral codes, and their politicians, brought up by these teachers, foment murders as a means of government. After how bitter a struggle had I chosen the West and not the East! And now I was beginning to listen to the reasonings of Jewish nationalists when the war came to fill up our lives and postpone any solution to these problems.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SOVIET EXPANSION INTO THE MIDDLE EAST

Needed: A Post-Geneva Containment Strategy

GEORGE LICHTHEIM

LONDON

WHEN the Geneva Conference ended last July in a glow of harmony and mutual satisfaction, cynical observers were heard to comment that now that the menace of world war had been banished, the "little wars" between the powers could commence. The backlog of unresolved conflicts at that time included the interminable struggle between India and Pakistan over control of Kashmir; continuous border warfare between Egypt and Israel; tension between France and the Arab League over North Africa; and a noisy squabble between India and Portugal over Goa. It was a safe guess that by the autumn things would get hot in at least one of these areas, but no one seriously thought of including the Eastern Mediterranean—let alone did anyone consider it likely that a Greco-Turkish clash over Cyprus might come close to wrecking the southern end of the NATO system, or that Colonel Nasser would take the Egyptian army halfway behind the Iron Curtain. Yet both these events have occurred since September, while to all intents the great powers are further than ever from settling their main differences. Is the public then to understand that coexistence with Russia will have to be practiced against a background of rapid political disintegration on the Western side, while the East conserves the advantages inherent in the centralized system inherited by Stalin's successors?

IT SEEMS reasonable to suppose that this is indeed what the Kremlin had in mind when it signified its willingness to negotiate a *détente*. It is certainly not what was intended on the Western side, but events have shaped themselves this way, and it is interesting to study the effect Geneva has had on this process. In saying this one ought not to credit the Soviet government with the ability to foresee all the consequences that have flowed from the Four Power conference last summer; it is conceivable that some of them have come as a surprise to the Russians no less than to the West. But insofar as the general effect of Geneva has been to re-admit the USSR to the traditional game of power politics in Europe and the Middle East, it must have been obvious to the Soviet policy-makers that penetration in some key areas would become easier. In this respect there can have been no dispute between Molotov—now apparently under fire from the party secretariat for reasons not yet disclosed—and his colleague Suslov, who is in charge of the Cominform and ideological warfare generally. Molotov's days in office may be numbered, and the Cominform may eventually be dissolved in deference to Yugoslav wishes, but the general line is unlikely to be changed. Why should it be? Everything that has happened since Geneva suggests that the post-Stalin policy of greater flexibility in relation to other powers is paying dividends.

It is likewise apparent that the principal fields of Soviet expansion for the time being are the Balkans and the Middle East. It must have cost Stalin's successors some sacrifice of

---

WITH Egypt's suddenly announced decision to buy arms from Czechoslovakia and the USSR, the Kremlin has succeeded in extending its influence directly into the Middle East—this coming after Soviet successes in the Balkans and the Mediterranean area. Is the price, then, of Geneva the expansion of Soviet influence, GEORGE LICHTHEIM asks, or can the West devise a new, post-Geneva containment strategy? Mr. Lichtheim is one of our regular contributors; his "Changing Alignments in the Middle East" appeared last month.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pride to let Peking take over the major responsibility for Asia (except in India, whose Communist party apparently retains an independent pipeline to Moscow), but having accepted the principle of a near-equal partnership, they are evidently trying to make it work. Again, in dealing with their chosen field of expansion, they have gone some distance to meet criticism of Stalin's characteristic manner of treating satellites and potential allies. The recent ideological demotion of Molotov—apart from disclosing a remarkable degree of indifference to the October Foreign Ministers' conference announced with such fanfare in the summer—is chiefly significant for its continued devaluation of the Stalinist legacy. The Yugoslav Communists and other heretics are to have further assurances that there will be no return to the old system of rigid control from an infallible center. Behind the political drama of the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit to Belgrade last spring, and the more recent Mikoyan mission, there lay a return to the traditional pre-revolutionary Balkan tug-of-war between East and West (in those days symbolized by Petersburg and Vienna). This suits Belgrade to perfection, for it is the essence of the Titoist position that East and West should tacitly agree to a live-and-let-live policy from which the smaller powers can benefit. Without knowing what either Mikoyan or Robert Murphy had to say to Marshal Tito during their almost simultaneous visits to his country, one may be sure that each encountered the same Yugoslav readiness to profit from the rivalry between East and West. British observers in Belgrade seem certain that Tito is determined never again to become an economic satellite of Russia. But Moscow is willing to bid high to achieve this result, and there are those who suspect that Belgrade, in its eagerness to get the best out of both worlds, may one day discover that the economic net has tightened. The danger could be met by letting Yugoslavia enter the European Payments Union, but the club entrance fee—between $50 and $100 million—is rather high for a country in Yugoslavia's straitened condition. Still, there is a possible solution here, and it may be that Mr. Murphy's visit to Belgrade had something to do with it.

Move farther south, and further evidence of the extension of Soviet influence meets the observer's eye. The Greek parliamentarian who, at the height of the Cyprus crisis, asked the government to reconsider its general orientation toward East and West did not start a landslide, but he did loosen a pebble. So did Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus when he accepted Communist support against the British "occupation" of the island, which happens to be the keystone of the NATO arch in the Eastern Mediterranean. In neither case did Moscow have to lift a finger. But it is going too far to credit the Russians with the ability to foresee all the follies of their opponents. From the Soviet viewpoint there is an embarrassing variety of possible choices, all tending to the same result, e.g. backing Greece wholeheartedly over Cyprus, or alternatively offering to promote "harmony" on the island: either policy must eventually redound to the advantage of the local Communists. But in fact this particular issue can probably be left to the joint mismanagement of London, Athens, and Ankara.

No Kremlin strategist could have foreseen, let alone planned and executed, the Istanbul riots which wrecked not merely the Greek quarter but the Greco-Turkish alliance. What happened was quite simply that Greece and Turkey (with some inexpert British prompting) temporarily reverted to the "normal" game of politics as traditionally played in the Balkans. That, too, was among the fruits of Geneva. After all, had not the great powers solemnly inaugurated an era of world peace, i.e. non-atomic warfare? Why then should the minor nations be forbidden to indulge their customary habits? And if Turkey, already in financial trouble and vainly trying to raise loans, has further spoiled her chance of getting the special $300-million loan or grant demanded from the United States last spring, is it not nonetheless fairly certain that, if things become

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

really dangerous, Washington will step in to save its NATO partner from bankruptcy?

But the most spectacular result of post-Geneva "normalcy" has undoubtedly been the Egyptian government's decision to buy arms from the USSR and Czechoslovakia. Not that this announcement was entirely unexpected when it came: there had been ample hints of it for some time. Colonel Nasser was an honored guest at Bandung last April, and it was common knowledge in Cairo after his return that he had been greatly impressed by Chou En-lai. But Geneva certainly eased matters for him. If there was to be a return to the 1945 atmosphere, that is, a more or less amicable East-West competition without strident ideological overtones, then Egypt was certainly entitled to buy arms from behind the Iron Curtain, even if it meant letting Czech technicians roam about in the Suez area. Conversely, if the Western powers did not want this to happen, they must appeal to Moscow. But this meant giving the Russians a foothold in the Middle East, an area from which they had hitherto been carefully excluded. Once more the Kremlin could profit from a situation created by its opponents. The panicky reaction in Washington and London was out of proportion to Egypt's importance as such, but disclosed a keen appreciation of the extent to which the defensive "wall" around the Middle East had been breached by Colonel Nasser. In terms of traditional diplomacy, both the Russians and Egyptians were strictly within their rights, and was not the return to traditional diplomacy precisely the aim of the statesmen who conferred at Geneva last July?

Because it would have been tactless to raise the issue of Soviet penetration in the Middle East (especially after the Cairo Junta had demonstratively turned a deaf ear), official spokesmen in Washington and London fell back on the theme of the dangers arising out of the Israel-Egypt arms race. These dangers are real, for no one doubts the use to which Egypt's new equipment is eventually to be put, but they are not uppermost in the minds of those who now make play with them. A "second round" has long been regarded as probable by American and British officials, and until quite recently this prospect did not inspire undue alarm—witness the steady sale of arms to the Arab states, unaccompanied by any attempt to convert the 1949 truce into a real peace. It is only now that real concern has been created, for now the Russians have got a foot in the door and are able to intrigue with governments hitherto regarded as immune by reason of their supposed fear of Communism.

This estimate was always a little naive where Colonel Nasser and his friends were concerned (some members of the Junta are almost certainly crypto-Communists or fellow-travelers, while the others are only divided over the kind of authoritarian semi-fascist, or semi-Kemalist—but in any case undemocratic—regime they want to establish). The same estimate is now shown to have little validity even for medieval states like Saudi Arabia, one of the few countries in the world where slaves are still publicly sold in the market place. There is no need even to mention the chaotic parliamentary regime of the Syrian Republic, or little Lebanon, whose Communist party will never "seize power," but plays the key role of intermediary among the Communist movements of the bigger Arab countries. ("The Lebanese Communists, too, have their task," as Molotov remarked to the Austrian delegates last April, when asked half-seriously what he thought would become of the small Austrian Communist party after the withdrawal of the Russian troops.)

As for Israel, no one seriously supposes that its government will compromise its democratic principles, but equally no one imagines that in a situation similar to that of 1948 the Israelis will hesitate to buy arms from any quarter willing to sell: preferably from the West, if necessary from the East.*

*The State Department has already reported "indications" of the Soviet bloc's willingness to sell arms to Israel.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But the East seems to have made its choice, much to the discomfiture of Israel's sentimental left-wingers, whose political and intellectual leaders have remained true to the moth-eaten doctrines on which they were brought up. On the whole, it seems likely that Israel will continue to get its equipment from Western Europe (notably France) and perhaps from the United States. If, as some observers are beginning to think, 1956 sees a forward movement of the political tide, which has been rather sluggish since about 1950, this particular problem should not be insoluble. Even a partial comeback of the Democratic or New Deal forces in the U.S., coupled with greater influence for Mendès-France and political leaders of his tendency in Europe, should go a long way to remove Israel's threatening isolation. For this isolation is largely a function of the conservative tide which has been flowing for the past five or six years: big business and its political friends are instinctively on the side of the big battalions, or at any rate on the side of those with access to oil wells. (So far as actual battalions are concerned, the advantage is probably on Israel's side: not only qualitatively but, strange as it may seem, numerically too.)

This last-named subject is inevitably hedged about with secrecy. For some baffling reason the British government is unwilling to disclose the details of its arms supplies to Egypt, while Colonel Nasser's own statements, since the announcement of the deal with Czechoslovakia, have fallen into the more-sorry-than-angry category: but for the Western arms blockade of his regime, it appears, he would have been glad to go on acting as democracy's strong right arm in the Middle East. Yet certain facts have leaked out; *inter alia,* it has been stated by the military correspondent of the London *Times* that Egypt's total defense forces number 100,000 men, plus a "National Guard" of 50,000; whereas Israel can mobilize about 250,000 men within forty-eight hours. Since Egypt has twenty million people to Israel's million and a half (not counting her Arab minority), this comparison suggests some doubt as to Cairo's standing in the Middle East. But sheer weight of numbers may tell in the long run, especially if the larger power can afford to "cannibalize" its equipment as fresh supplies come in from overseas. Here the support of the Eastern bloc is of real importance to the Cairo Junta, and a real source of anxiety to Western policy-makers. For if it can be plausibly represented to the Egyptian officers corps that Soviet supplies are needed to build up an adequate war reserve, the Junta need have little worry over the army's attitude to its foreign policy.

It was probably inevitable in the circumstances that the first panicky thoughts of the policy-makers in Washington and London should have turned to the crude game of outbidding the Russians; but if it is a fact that Moscow has offered Cairo two to three hundred surplus MIG planes, in addition to artillery, submarines, and other arms, one does not see what kind of Western counterstroke would have been feasible. The correct policy, as the *Times* promptly suggested, was to make it clear to the Egyptians that acceptance of Russia's offer meant cutting themselves off from the West. Sound if belated advice, but firmness in the face of dictatorial blackmail has rarely been among the habits of Western governments.

IT WOULD be pleasant were one able to conclude this catalogue of woes with some hopeful reflections on the inherent weaknesses of Soviet-Communist policy in relation to the new problems which will present themselves in the Balkans, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. Unfortunately this kind of writing has become distinctly less easy since the replacement of the peculiar Stalinist rigidity of 1947-52 by a more flexible policy. There are observers who go so far as to speak of a genuine revival of the Soviet Communist *party* as a political force able to provide a rational direction for Soviet policy at home and abroad. Without sharing this view, one may yet note that the Communist movement has to some extent managed to get out of the tactical straitjacket imposed upon it during Stalin's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

last years, although this revival is more marked in Asia than in Europe. To the extent that it has taken place, it is becoming easier for Communist parties to make use of the opportunities created for them by the USSR's growing weight on the international scene.

The revival of the Communist movement has certainly not been halted since Geneva. On the contrary. It is reflected in the self-confidence exuded by the Khrushchev-Bulganin team on the increasingly numerous occasions where Western delegates are able to buttonhole the new rulers; and it will probably find dramatic expression at the party congress next February, to which observers from all countries are likely to receive invitations. There is at the moment a certain tendency in the West, notably in the United States, to describe this aggressive self-confidence as being somehow contrary to the "Geneva spirit." Perhaps it is, if by the Geneva spirit one means the kind of hopeful publicity about peace and prosperity that became the fashion last summer. But in fairness to the Russians, it must be recorded that they understood Geneva to signify the West's tacit recognition of the fact that the Sino-Soviet bloc cannot be compelled to renounce any of its conquests.

If this interpretation is correct, the real question is not whether the Kremlin has been misbehaving itself since Geneva, but what the Western powers propose to do in order to cope with the inevitable growth of Communist influence which is a direct consequence of Geneva. But perhaps that question, too, is merely a piece of rhetoric. There are limits to what governments can do, even if they are abler, more intelligent, and less conventionally minded than those we have lately been getting. The real issue perhaps is whether there are political forces outside the present official framework that could give fresh direction to Western policy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONGRESS'S RIGHT TO INVESTIGATE

Two Books Examined

PAUL R. HAYS

SENATOR McCARTHY seems to have departed the scene pretty permanently and the hysterical cries of "McCarthyism in the saddle" and "dictatorship" are scarcely heard any more. But many of the real questions raised by Congressional investigations of Communism still remain (as witness the recent inquiry into the theater in New York City). Two recently published books, Telford Taylor's *Grand Inquest* and Alan Barth's *Government by Investigation,* present what might be designated, respectively, as the answers of the liberal lawyer and the libertarian journalist.

The heart of General Taylor's book is its treatment of various legal problems arising in connection with Congressional investigation. For all its brilliance of legal analysis and the professional soundness of its legal conclusions, the book fails to give an authoritative answer to the basic problem of the Constitutional limitations on the right of Congress to investigate Communism. Why should this be so? Fundamentally, I believe, because such an answer is not to be found within the area of the professional competence of lawyers.

That the legal answers are insufficient is apparent even at what one might call the most elementary level. For if the courts should operate exactly as Taylor hopes they will, witnesses who correctly estimate their rights and adequately present their claims may not go to jail, but will presumably still suffer the infamy and obloquy of the legislative "exposures"—and these are the real grounds for Taylor's dissatisfaction with Congressional investigations.

In every case the resolution, even the legal resolution, of the basic problems raised by Congressional investigations will depend on the evaluation of facts, and on views and opinions as to what *should* be done. The individual citizen will have to resolve these questions as political ones, and little in Taylor's brilliant legal abilities will help him, unless by chance he is faced with the possibility of going to jail on a charge of contempt of Congress.

General Taylor, for example, says of the legal limitations imposed by the First Amendment: "If the First Amendment is to retain any effective force, it must at least be held to mean that freedom of speech and press shall not be abridged, in the interests of national security, one jot or tittle more than may reasonably be regarded as *necessary* to preserve the governmental and constitutional framework which itself creates those freedoms." "If the investigation is . . . carried out in such a way as to impinge upon the constitutional guarantees by forcing individuals to disclose their opinions and associations, then the necessity for such a course of action must be substantially supported."

IT IS now possible to deal in a calmer atmosphere with the problem of safeguarding our civil liberties while taking the necessary protective measures against Communist infiltration of public life. Here PAUL R. HAYS considers two works devoted to the Congressional investigating committees, Telford Taylor's *Grand Inquest* (Simon and Schuster, 358 pp., $4.50) and Alan Barth's *Government by Investigation* (Viking, 220 pp., $3.00). Mr. Hays is professor of law at Columbia University and a frequent contributor to the *Columbia Law Review,* among other periodicals, as well as author of two books, *Cases and Materials on Civil Procedure* and (with Milton Handler) *Cases on Labor Law.* Active at present as a labor arbitrator, he served on the New York State Board of Mediation from 1940 to 1944. Mr. Hays was born in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1903.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sound as these legal principles are in themselves, they solve precisely nothing for the reader of Taylor's book. For the resolution of these problems depends, for him, as for the courts, on how great the Communist menace seems to him (or to the courts) to be—that is, on his view of the "necessity" for the investigation.

Taylor has no doubts as to the danger of Communism from abroad and consequently believes that "in areas susceptible to espionage, it would appear that the most searching investigation of an individual's political background is both justifiable and desirable." It is in the field of what he says might be called "domestic and psychological warfare" that he finds excesses which he believes ought to be curbed by the courts. The danger from Communism in this field seems to him to be receding. "If there is a serious present danger from Communist infiltration in these fields, it is surely unfortunate that attention is so rarely focused on current or even recent circumstances, and that instead there is such intense preoccupation with events of five to twenty-five years ago. Even more disturbing is it that our investigators seem so much more concerned about individual political backgrounds than about concrete manifestations of Communist machination." "It takes no graduate degree to observe that Communist tactics in the United States are—as they must be—vastly different today from what they were fifteen or more years ago." While he accepts as fair the conclusion that "the Communist Party embodies a conspiracy to overthrow the government," and "that the conspiracy bulks large in the sum total of the Party's current aspects and activities," still, "it does not follow that the Party is only and nothing more than a conspiracy, or that every member or adherent is a conspirator." Communism includes also "a system of thought—the Marxist dialectic," and "a bundle of attitudes on current political issues, which the Party has promoted much in the manner of political parties generally, by nominating candidates for public office, or publishing newspapers and magazines." "Even though the Party is dominated by conspiratorial leaders, therefore, it is apparent that individuals may seek to join it for much less sinister reasons." Therefore, he asks, "Are all ex-Communists to be regarded as ex-criminal conspirators?"

It is possible, on the basis of the same kind of evidence that Taylor has used, to arrive at different conclusions.

Thus, there is evidence to support the view not only that Communist tactics are not vastly different today from what they were in the 30's, but also that there is no reason for them to be different, because the same tactics are used successfully in the same way. As to the failure to expose "manifestations of Communist machination," judgment must depend, of course, on what one considers a manifestation of Communist machination. What may seem to one man to be an exposure of such a manifestation may seem to another to be just a further instance of intolerance, nationalism, Know-Nothingism, and McCarthyism. Indeed, some of us who were vigorously anti-Communist in those different 30's may recall our frustration when we sought to expose to our fellow liberals the Communist manifestations of an earlier day—what Taylor calls the "weird *pasticcio* of sharecroppers, poll-taxes, Scottsboro boys, labor organizers and labor spies, munitions merchants and bankers, Spanish loyalists, refugees, boycotts, Russian war relief, Chiang Kai-shek, agrarian reform, the Stockholm 'peace appeal' and what not else," not excluding the purge trials which to so many liberals of that time seemed, as they seemed to Owen Lattimore, to be a proof of Soviet democracy.

The cry of McCarthyism which is raised against anti-Communist liberals of our day when they seek to expose what appear to them to be Communist machinations seems to some of us to be a tactic much like the tactic of crying "Red-baiter" in the 30's and 40's. Even the *pasticcio* could be thought of as having similarities in weirdness—Chiang Kai-shek is still with us, and has been joined by "the unspeakable" Syngman Rhee, the agrarian reformers have become the Mao

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Titoists, the Rosenbergs took over where the Scottsboro boys left off, the fight to defend Harry Bridges and other "militant labor leaders" continues, as does disparagement of such leaders as Reuther and Dubinsky; the Spanish civil war has been succeeded by the wars for liberation from "colonialism"; in place of the Stockholm Appeal, we now have not only the Helsinki Appeal but the opposition to German rearmament, and the whole spreading hopefulness as to the new look acquired by the Soviet dictatorship.*

As to the complex nature of Communism —part conspiracy, part philosophy, part politics—there is in Taylor's treatment of this a curious emphasis on legality. Marxism "is not criminal," membership in the Communist party is not "a crime," "there is nothing intrinsically criminal" about propaganda activities, and so forth. If the issue were suppression rather than exposure this emphasis would be more understandable. But Taylor has little patience with exposure and takes severely to task Judge Wyzanski and others who believe that exposure is a valuable safeguard of liberty.

And with this emphasis on legality and impatience with exposure, Taylor moves rather easily into the view that the questioning of ex-Communists is a form of extra-legal punishment. The implication of his question as to whether all ex-Communists are "ex-criminal conspirators" seems to be that unless Communist party members belong to the *illegal* side of Communism they ought to be immune from the "punishment" of exposure. But if one accepts as true the existence of the conspiracy (and believes the evidence that the purpose of the conspiracy is the destruction of democratic government and the physical annihilation of all opponents of the conspiracy), is it really so shocking an invasion of civil liberties to ask those who have participated in and supported the conspiracy, however innocently, to tell what they know about it?

Again, the answer may depend on how dangerous the conspiracy appears to be. For example, Taylor continually refers to witnesses as being questioned as to their "political affiliations," thus putting the stress on that aspect of Communist activity which is legal. Others might think that the party's conspiratorial activity far overshadows its other aspects, and that interrogation about Communist activity, even the questioning of non-ex-criminal conspirators, might properly be called questioning as to "conspiratorial affiliations." The questioning of innocent members of the Nazi organizations which were designated "criminal" at Nuremberg about the conspiracy to exterminate the Jews was rarely objected to on the ground that it constituted questioning as to political affiliations. In fact, if one considers the Communist conspiracy to be as horrible as was the Nazi conspiracy, there may be some surprise at the serenity with which those who once lent it support look back on their errors, and even at their reluctance to contribute what they can to exposing it. General Taylor quotes as "characteristic" a statement of a Dr. McGill, who refused to name other former members of the Communist party. Dr. McGill, after explaining how he came to join the Communist party, added: "I turned away from Communist ideas when I realized that in practice they were incompatible with my conception of human values." This statement, particularly when taken together with Dr. McGill's reluctance to "inform," appears to fall somewhat short of the passionate revulsion that might be expected, for example, from one

*I hope it is not still necessary to say that people can be for or against some, perhaps even all of these things *without* being Communists. That is not the point now, any more than it was the point in the 30's. Taylor deplores the *ad hominem* argument involved in the exposure of individuals who follow the Communist line and urges that ideas be tested not by personal accusation but rather on the merits. But it was exactly this attitude which led to the Communist successes among liberal Americans in the 30's and 40's. At least in the light of this experience, would it not be well to ask those who have no doubts as to the merits of, say, the idea of peace to consider just what *homines* are back of the Stockholm Appeal, or to ask those who cherish civil liberties and hate racial discrimination to consider just who make up the Civil Rights Congress and the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who, having innocently joined a Nazi organization, later discovers its true purpose to have been the murder of the Jewish people.

Like the First Amendment, the Fifth raises problems to which the purely legal answers the insufficient. The provision against self-incrimination has suddenly become one of the Constitution's major bulwarks of freedom. Just how it works this way none of those who have recently written on the subject have succeeded in pointing out. They turn to extensive discussion of the importance of the privilege prior to 1860, but are somewhat less clear about its importance today. In reality, the Fifth Amendment privilege seems to be a rather technical legalistic provision and, in the course of history, its use has been hedged about with considerable legalistic restriction. However, the Supreme Court has recently upheld a very liberal approach to its use. And as Taylor says, whatever its merits, the Fifth Amendment is a part of the Constitution "and so long as that state of affairs endures, the privilege ought to be respected and observed."

But, of course, the issue is not whether the Constitution ought to be "respected," but rather whether witnesses who plead the privilege ought to be respected. So far as I know, no one ever demanded any particular respect for witnesses who pleaded the privilege when asked questions about their participation in murders, robberies, or rapes, although their Constitutional right so to plead is universally conceded. The demand arose only when witnesses began to plead the privilege to protect themselves from answering questions as to Communism. Taylor, whose logic is as sound as his law, is not taken in by this attitude. He recognizes that "there are many situations" in which taking refuge in the plea of privilege "should disqualify a person from public trust or responsibility." But again, law and logic do not suffice. What about lawyers, teachers, factory workers, and actors, Taylor asks. His answer in terms of no "automatic" exclusion because of the plea is reasonable enough, but only postpones the real decision one more step. The recommendation of the Bar Association Committee, that lawyers who plead the Fifth Amendment be disbarred, he characterizes as a "betrayal of professional responsibilities," "wretched funking," "wrongheadedness," and a "virus" that "is spreading." And yet his argument against the recommendation for disbarment is largely in terms of two New York cases which held that lawyers could not be disbarred for pleading the privilege. Many would agree with him that pleading the privilege should not lead to "automatic" disbarment, but might it not properly lead to a request for an explanation, and are we not then again in the area where one's view of what should be done depends on one's evaluation of the Communist menace?

The inadequacy of legal solutions is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the vexed question of naming others. If a witness, claiming that he himself had subsequently reformed, admitted having belonged to a gang of professional murderers, few people would feel that any special merit attached to his refusal to turn "informer" and to tell who others in the gang were. What is sometimes characterized as the traditional American revulsion against the "informer" would not lead to any great admiration for a reformed ex-SS man who would not give the names of those who helped him to dispose of Jews in the gas chambers. If this seems not to be an analogous situation, that is exactly the point. Whether witnesses before investigating committees should be required to name others depends not on any legal considerations at all, but on the view one takes of the nature, extent, and danger of the Communist conspiracy. "Personal compunctions cannot be permitted to obstruct valid official inquiries, but they are entitled to weigh in the scales when legal authority is lacking," Taylor says. But the question is, of course, what one feels one is weighing.

Factors which may be given varying weights are involved, for example, in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

question of how much reliance a witness who was duped into joining the Communist party, and who failed for a considerable period of time to discern its real purposes, can put upon his own judgment as to who were "innocents" and who were not. Most of the people who knew Alger Hiss, including, for example, Dean Acheson, John Foster Dulles, Felix Frankfurter, and Stanley Reed, would probably have been willing to swear that he was not a Communist at all, and no doubt the non-underground members of his cell would have sworn that he was an "innocent." If they had been called upon to testify as to the names of others they would probably have felt "personal compunctions" against naming Hiss. His activities were so long in the past, no doubt he had long since left the party, his connection with it was based upon the anti-Nazi, pro-Spanish Loyalist, pro-New Deal reasons of most of the party members recruited in the 30's. But a frank disclosure by a disillusioned innocent in 1934 or 1935 might have led to an investigation which would have revealed the truth about Hiss and prevented much of the damage which the nation suffered from the Communist underground.

Taylor believes that Alan Westin's article in COMMENTARY ("Do Silent Witnesses Defend Civil Liberties?" June 1953) "totally overlooks the question of the legal authority of the committees." That a witness has a legal *right* to protect himself by taking refuge in technical defenses no one can dispute; but to suggest that there is some *duty* to do so appears unwarranted. A witness may weigh "personal compunctions" against "legal authority," and if he wishes he may raise the issue of the lack of "legal authority" to protect his compunctions, but if he takes this course he cannot properly claim that he is doing it for some other reason such as the defense of civil liberties. And if he does make this claim, then a victory for "personal compunctions" has resulted from his having weighed these compunctions not against any lack of "legal authority" in the investigating committee, but in fact against his moral obligation to answer—and against the possible danger resulting from his remaining silent.

THIS issue is important in Taylor's discussion of the experience of James A. Wechsler in his appearance before the McCarthy committee. It is Taylor's view that Wechsler named others because "he felt himself gripped" in "a dilemma, born of the illusion of legislative omnipotence." This seems to me to miss Wechsler's point. It is unlikely that Wechsler did not have competent legal advice and that he was unaware of the possibility of resorting to legal devices as an alternative to testifying. What Wechsler did was consciously and resolutely to reject an appeal to legal technicalities. His "personal compunctions" about naming others were occasioned by the character of his inquisitor, and not by any opposition to inquiry as to Communist affiliations. These compunctions he carefully weighed against what he conceived to be his duty. It was no "illusion of legislative omnipotence" which led Wechsler to name others, but rather the fact that his patriotism and his high sense of moral obligation outweighed "personal compunctions."

On James Wechsler's scales a sturdy defense of freedom of the press, a determined opposition to McCarthyism, and an informed awareness of the dangers of Communism outweighed the possibility of resort to the protection of "legal authority." Many will find in Wechsler's courageous resolution of the issues a far greater contribution to civil liberties, and to the downfall of McCarthy, than they can discern in the actions of, for example, Harvey O'Connor and Corliss Lamont, who chose to place the greater weight on "legal authority."

In what he calls the "cold civil war," General Taylor draws the lines between those who have "respect for law and regard for truth," and those "who sow suspicion and fear in our land." He demands that "we be of one mind on the fundamentals of our way of life." But liberals are by definition those very persons who most indulge in that "detachment and individuality" the disappearance of which from American life Gen-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eral Taylor so much deplores. He will surely be able to depend on their aid in his fight against both McCarthyism and Communism, but some of them may trouble him by wishing to put the emphasis of their attack at a little different place in some parts of the battlefield.

ALAN BARTH'S book is on the same general subject as Taylor's, but it is so much weaker in analysis and less convincing in argument that the two should hardly be considered together. Even its title, *Government by Investigation,* is an exaggeration, and its approach is unsound in legal analysis and remiss in its astonishing underestimation of Communist influence in this country (it does recognize the danger from without).

Mr. Barth appears, for example, to have the curious idea that Congressional committees which question witnesses whom grand juries have failed to indict are violating ("perverting") the constitutional right to grand jury action in criminal cases. He seems to believe that Congress has no powers except those which some court has "said" it has. He completely misconceives the legal status of a "mere" executive or legislative finding of clear and present danger, and finds it "hard to accept" such a finding, although, of course, under the law such a finding is properly to be considered hard to reject. (Shades of the New Deal days when "liberals" like Barth were denouncing the courts for *not* accepting legislative and executive findings!) His discussion of the Barsky case does not make legal sense. He finds some injustice in the practice of Congressional committees which do not publicly question witnesses who have denied Communist affiliations in executive sessions, and he seems to have the fantastic notion that any investigation of an individual executive employee is a legislative invasion of executive power.

Barth discusses at great length a hearing before Senator Eastland in the course of the Senate Internal Security Committee's investigation of Communist influence in the Southern Conference Educational Fund. After describing the low character of the ex-Communist witness who testified as to such influence, he states that "by contrast" his principal targets were Aubrey Williams, Clifford Durr (a "former president of the National Lawyers Guild"), Virginia Durr (a "militant champion of civil rights"), Dr. James A. Dombrowski ("head of the Highlander Folk School, an interracial institution at Monteagle, Tennessee"). "All of them had long been outspoken advocates of racial equalitarianism in the South."

Mr. Barth quotes in full, and with obvious approval, the statement Mrs. Durr was prevented from making for the record. In it she denounced the Committee as a "kangaroo court," insisted that witnesses were actually being tried as "traitors," "on the basis of testimony of paid informers," and ended with the words, "I refuse to submit to the authority of this committee and I stand in total and utter contempt of it."

When the ex-Communist witness testified that Mrs. Durr "had full knowledge of the Communist conspiracy when she allegedly persuaded Justice Black to speak to the Southern Conference for Human Welfare in 1938," Mr. Durr, who was present at the hearing, said, "I'll kill that man." When the witness left the stand, "shaking with rage so he could hardly speak [Durr] shouted at [the witness], 'You son of a bitch—talk about my wife like that and I'll kill you.'" Durr then had to be "forcibly restrained from assaulting" the witness.

Of this conduct Barth says: "Perhaps violence—and contempt—were the only responses such a proceeding could evoke among Americans of honor and sensibility. Durr's conduct may have been quixotic, but it was in a tradition Americans have long respected. Mrs. Durr's refusal to answer questions may have been of dubious legal validity, but it surely had much moral justification."

Not only does Barth have no space for any of the very considerable evidence of Communist influence on the Southern Conference (it is enough for him that it purported to advocate "racial equalitarianism"),

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but he obviously has little or no patience with law or legal procedures.

Barth believes that "perhaps the most common reason for recourse to the Fifth Amendment" is the desire not to "inform" on others whose "indiscretions were entirely innocent and entirely in the past." (In other words, there should in most cases be an inference of *innocence* drawn from the plea.) Barth is horrified by "informers." He quotes with approval one Dr. Mahaney, a former Communist who refused to identify former fellow Communists, saying: "to be an informer . . . is contrary to every tenet of American thinking. . . . It is a matter of deep and abiding conscience with me. . . . I can only say in accordance with Martin Luther, 'So help me God, I can do no other.'"

But Dr. Mahaney proved in the end to be somewhat less stalwart than Martin Luther. When he was threatened with the loss of his job, he named a number of people who were members of the party in the period from 1935 to 1947, during which time Dr. Mahaney persisted in the innocent indiscretion of membership in the Communist party "because he mistakenly believed it was devoted to promoting world peace and disarmament." He named his former wife "as a companion at Communist meetings." The immolation of this latter-day Luther is criticized by Barth as follows: "What manner of investigation is it that will stretch a human spirit upon a rack as cruel in its way as any in the torture chambers of the medieval Inquisition in order to wrest from him, not a confession of his own heresy—he had confessed that long since—but an accusation leveled at old friends, leveled even at the woman he had once promised to honor and to cherish?"

Barth has pity, perhaps mixed with a little contempt, for Bishop Oxnam, who by testifying "found himself helping the committee in its efforts to discredit Professor [Harry F.] Ward" ("one of the great liberal and inspirational leaders of the Methodist Church").

In view of Barth's small reliance on the "legal authority" on which Taylor relies so heavily, and in view of the "common sense" of the American people, who *will* persist, as Barth recognizes, in thinking the worst of a witness who pleads the Fifth Amendment, what does the author suggest that his martyrs do? Why, defy the Committee. This may be "altogether unwarranted in law" and "it may also reflect a mistaken estimate of the particular persons it is intended to protect" (i.e. they may in fact be spies and traitors), but "it is an open and candid assumption of individual moral responsibility of a sort that is expected of men and women in a society where the individual conscience is recognized as the supreme authority. . . . And if it does not save the pleader from prison, it will save him at least from an enduring sense of shame." And a course which is "open alike to persons who never joined the Communist party and to those who once were members of it, is the course of protest. If a witness believes deeply that he cannot in good conscience cooperate with a committee which, in his judgment, is encroaching improperly on individual freedom, he can refuse, as Professor Albert Einstein suggested, to answer any of its questions, even those relating exclusively to himself." This course may "win the plaudits, and the gratitude, of posterity."

I do not know why Mr. Barth does not mention that this course is also "open to" *present* members of the Communist party. Perhaps it is because he does not believe that there are any. One might come to that conclusion from reading his book.

IT SEEMS to me that General Taylor, in his concentration on the law, has failed adequately to evaluate the evidence, while Mr. Barth's contempt for the law has led him to ignore both law and evidence. Perhaps it is time now, when a calmer attitude prevails, for a judicious re-examination of the whole issue, a careful evaluation of the evidence of the extent of the Communist menace in an atmosphere free alike from the bawlings of McCarthy and the yowlings of those whose fears were so assiduously whipped up by cries of McCarthyism.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JEWISH FIRST NAMES THROUGH THE AGES

Juanita to Yente: Shaindel to Sandra

BENZION C. KAGANOFF

FOR Jews, first names are inevitably something more than convenient labels for identification, mere tags to facilitate human intercourse in a civilized society. Among us they take on a highly charged symbolic value, as the feverish name-coinings and Hebraizations of old names in Israel in the past few years tell us, or our own searchings for a "suitable" name for a newborn infant. So it is that Jewish names can serve as clues for deciphering the cultural patterns of Jewish history: from them we can determine whether people's sentiments inclined towards separateness or assimilation —or Jewish nationalism. We can tell when the Jews were loyal to the Hebrew language, and when indifferent. And names also reveal something about the changing political and economic orientations of Jews through the centuries.

IT IS a strong tradition among American Jews to name their children after departed relatives. And yet we find no trace of this custom in the Bible. In ancient days the name a Jew gave his child was generally connected with some event, familiar or public, that had happened at his birth. The name usually took on a symbolic meaning, denoting a wish for the newborn infant's good fortune, expressing thanks to God, etc. ("And he called his name Gershom, for he said: I have been a *stranger* in a strange land" Exod. 2:22.) Most of the names we find among the early Hebrews in the Book of Genesis are of this kind. Usually, it would appear, the mother chose the name (as in the case of Jacob's sons and the prophet Samuel); sometimes the father selected it (as in the case of Abraham's sons). Often, as in the naming of Moses and King Solomon, persons other than the parents were the name-givers. In remote antiquity, the custom was to name a male infant immediately upon birth (a practice still followed by the Arabs today); later on a boy received his name at the ceremony of circumcision (see Luke 1:59; 2:21).

In the early Biblical period first names were proper names in the full sense of the term, being the exclusive possession of the person upon whom they were first conferred. Every child bore a name uniquely his, and coined on the occasion of his birth; no one would ever use that name again. Over a period of two thousand years we find no recurrence of the names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, etc. Even in the royal family no names were repeated. Not one of the twenty-one kings of Judah was named after David, first of the dynasty.

In the later Biblical period, however, names begin to be repeated, and later still we find the Talmud (tractate Yoma 38b) prohibiting the use of the name of a wicked person. This prohibition is based on the commentary of Rabbi Elazar on Proverbs 10:7 —"The memory of the righteous shall be for a blessing, but *the name of the wicked shall rot.*" But Jews, it would seem, never abided by this prohibition. Even rabbis in the Talmudic period disregarded it. Thus we find several High Priests and Tannaim who bore the name of Ishmael. (In the Bible, Ishmael is classed among the wicked, and in rabbinic literature he is a symbol of impiety,

---

BENZION C. KAGANOFF, who here chronicles the changing fortunes of Jewish names through the ages, is rabbi of the Congregation Anshe Sholom in Chicago. He now has two small daughters, named Aleta Debra and Yarona Civia—which, he tells us, represents a kind of distillation of the fruits of his labors on the subject of Jewish names.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

though some rabbis considered him to have turned penitent at the end of his life.) Menachem, which was the name of a king of Israel (II Kings 15:17 *et seq.*), is found only once in the Bible; about him the Bible says: "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam." Yet many Tannaim and Amoraim were named Menachem and it is very common even today. On the other hand, the names of such pious figures as the prophets Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Malachi, and others completely disappeared among Jews after the Biblical era. If there are special reasons why some names have withstood the test of time, and not others, scholars have not been able to discover them.

IN THE early Biblical period, Jewish names are Hebrew names. But in the period following the destruction of the First Temple and the carrying off of the Jews into the Babylonian captivity, foreign names and modifications begin to make their appearance. From this period date many of the traditional modes of Jewish name-giving, as well as that process of admixture and combination which has resulted in the bizarre assortment of names borne by Jews today.

During this sojourn by the waters of Babylon, and even in the first generation of the Return, the Jews displayed two contrary tendencies, one nationalist and the other assimilationist. One section of the exiles was full of a fierce patriotic fervor, as evidenced by their loyal devotion to the Hebrew language and the pure Biblical names they bestowed on their children. Throughout the later books of the Bible, in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles, the old Hebrew names of the patriarchal era—Joseph, Benjamin, Simeon—reappear. These early Pentateuchal names nostalgically recall the old heroic times.

This devotion to Judaism was not only a looking back to the glorious past. For in addition to reviving the old disused names, which had been half forgotten or never popular, the Jewish patriots of the period created Hebrew names that do not appear in the earlier books of the Bible. These names—Nehemiah, Chasadiah, Pedaiah, Melatiah, etc.—express the sentiments of the people in an era of transition, sentiments of hope, consolation, thanksgiving, joy, and trust in the Almighty. But few of these new names are current today.

At the same time, side by side with this patriotic emphasis on Hebrew tradition, there was an opposite tendency to imitate and assimilate foreign forms. The tendency reveals itself in the Aramaic forms which many names acquire during this period (when the Aramaic language had begun to spread over Western Asia and Palestine). We find many names in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles with the Aramaic ending *ai*. Even names that have a Hebrew root are converted into an Aramaic form, as for example: Piltai (from Pelatiah), Shammai (from Shemaiah), Atlai (from Ataliah), and a name which has been much in the public eye, Adlai (from Adaliah). We also come across names entirely and directly Aramaic, as well as names borrowed by the Jews from neighboring peoples. Persian-Babylonian names, brought back from the Exile, make their first appearance at this time. Two names in this last category, Mordecai and Shabbetai, have remained popular to this day despite their pagan origin.

DURING the period of Alexander's rule, new Hebrew names continued to be invented. Examples of these occur in the early Mishnayoth: Shatach, Admon, Perachiah. But most of the Jewish names of the time were Aramaic, with the members of the aristocracy beginning to use Greek ones. Even the first scholar of the Mishnah bore the purely Greek name of Antigonos.

In the Hasmonean period, when Hellenistic culture dominated the Western world, we already find a widespread use of Greek names among the Jews. Jews even bore the name of their fiercest persecutor, Antiochus, the Seleucid (Greek-Syrian) emperor against whom the Maccabees had successfully rebelled. Greek names were employed by Jews for many centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple by the Roman Titus in 70 C.E.; in the Mishnah and Talmudic literatures we find many Tannaim and Amoraim

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with such Greek names as Alexander, Theodorus, Dosa, Nanos, Nakdimon, Polemo, Pappos, Patros, Symmachos, Tarfon, etc.

Following the Roman conquest of Palestine, a strong Latin influence made itself felt, though it was never so extensive as the Greek. In the Mishnaic and Talmudic literatures (especially the Palestinian Talmud) we encounter many rabbis with Latin names: Drusus, Marinus, Valens, Romanus, Justus, and, *mirabile dictu,* in several places in the Palestinian Talmud mention is made of a Rabbi Titus! There were Jews who even bore the names of the pagan Roman gods, Apollo and Castor. However, the Persian-Aramaic names of previous times continued to predominate in the Talmudic period.

The custom of using a non-Jewish name as a companion and addition to one's Hebrew name originated several centuries before the destruction of the Second Temple. In the later books of the Bible we encounter such double names as Hadassah Esther and Daniel Belshazzar; Channaniah, Michael, and Azariah are also called Shedrach, Mishech, and Abed Nego. During the period of Greek influence it became customary to have two Hebrew names (a practice still followed today); we find such combinations as Mahalalel Judah, Sarah Miriam, and Yochanan Joseph. Sometimes a Hebrew and an Aramaic name were used together. During this period, too, the linking of a Jewish with a non-Jewish name became more and more the fashion. Beginning among the Hellenizing Jewish assimilationists, it gradually spread to the traditionalists. All the Hasmonean kings had a dual Hebrew-Greek name: Yochanan-Hyrcanos; Yannai-Alexander; Judah-Aristobolos; Shlomis-Alexandra.

At first, the non-Jewish names were used only in relations with non-Jews. One's Greek name was a direct translation of one's Hebrew name, with Tuvia becoming Ariston; Ezra being metamorphosed into Boethus; Zadok into Justus; Yedidiah into Philo; Nathaniel into Theodorus; etc. Gradually, however, the non-Jewish name became the more important one, and finally the only name. (The same process is taking place today.) When we come upon scholars in the Mishnah and Talmudic literatures with purely Greek names, we must assume they had no other. The rabbis of the Talmud deplored this situation, but to no avail.

Some names of the Talmudic era were authentic Hebrew names, and readily recognizable as such, but Hellenized in form or spelling. Joseph appears in the form of Jose; Levi as Levites; Yitzchak as Isak; Shimon as Simon; etc.

A small percentage of feminine proper names were Hebrew; many were Aramaic, e.g., Uma, Martha, Yalta (a shortened version of Ayalta, which is the Aramaic form of the Hebrew Ayala). Some feminine Latin and Greek names were used: Alexandra, Berenice, Doris, Beruria (the Aramaized form of Veluria). Women were for the most part excluded from political and business life so that there was less need for Hellenizing or Romanizing their names.

In the Talmudic period, the strong influence of Greek-Roman culture acted to reduce the number of Hebrew names, though there was never any danger, of course, of their being extinguished. We find obscure Biblical names suddenly grown popular because of the distinction won by certain of their bearers, as in the case of Hillel and Gamliel. New Hebrew names not found in the Bible, such as Akabiah, Akashiah, Akiba, Meir, and Nachman, came to the fore at this time.

THE custom of naming a child after a deceased relative seems to have begun in the time of the Hasmoneans. (Traces of it can be found in the alternation of the names of Onias and Simon in the High Priestly family from 332 to 165 B.C.E.) At first, the practice was confined to the royal family and aristocracy. Among the Hasmoneans we find a recurrence of the names of Judah, Yochanan, and Jonathan; among the Patriarchs of Judea we find two Hillels, three Judahs, six Gamliels, and four Simeons. Gradually the custom spread among the people, and has been followed to this day. The practice was well established by the first century of the Common Era, as we can see from Luke 1:59-61,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

where a departure from it occasions surprise.

Early in the Middle Ages the Jews began to give their children Biblical names that had not been used for eight hundred years: Abraham, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Amnon, Elchanon, Baruch, Noah.

At this time, too, the new practice arose of enlisting abstract terms to serve as proper names: Emunah (faith), Nissim (miracles), etc. Also, special names were given to children born on certain days or during certain holidays. This custom was already prevalent in the Christian community: boys born on Sunday were called Dominic; during Easter, Pasquale; girls born on Christmas were called Natalie. In like manner, boys born on Saturday were called Sabbetai by Jewish parents; children born in the Purim season were called Mordecai or Esther; Yom Tov was conferred on children born during a festival; boys born on the Passover were called Pesach. There is even a record of one boy of the Middle Ages named Chanukah!

Until the 12th century, following the custom of Talmudic days, the Jews of Babylonia continued to use Aramaic and Persian names. A roster of the names of the Gaonim of the academies of Sura and Pumbedita shows that new Aramaic and Persian names were continually being added. Since Babylonia was then under Islamic rule and influence, pure Arabic names also occur. Thus one of the Exilarchs is named Josiah Hassan.

In Christian lands, the Jews very early began to give their children Christian names; we can perceive much the same pattern of development as characterized the Greek period. There was, for example, Rabbi Peter, the brilliant young Tosafist who died a martyr's death in France during the Second Crusade. Many of these Christian names were mere additional names or translations of the Hebrew; but others were the only names their bearers possessed. Some of these are still used by Jews today, and men are called up to read the Torah by them, so accepted is their Jewish status now.

From the 12th century onward, so widespread was the use of non-Jewish names that the rabbis decreed that every Jewish boy must be given a purely Jewish name at his circumcision. Thus the use of two names became the custom: a religious name (*shem-hakodesh*) by which a Jew was called up to read the Torah and which was employed in documents of a religious nature (*gittin* and *kethuboth*); and a non-Jewish name, called the *kinnui,* for civil and business purposes. In the category of religious names were included not only old and new Hebrew names, but also all the Aramaic and Greek names which had been sanctified as it were by constant usage in the Jewish community. This rabbinic statute is valid to this day.

The Ashkenazic (German, Alsatian, Polish, Austrian, Russian) Jews were more lavish in their use of non-Jewish names for extra-community purposes than any other group. When they used their Hebrew names, they were so garbled in pronunciation as to be virtually unrecognizable. There are two reasons for this process of corruption: the peculiar dialects of the German language; and the tendency for the nicknames and diminutives conferred on children by doting parents to be retained in mature years and handed down to the next generation in place of the original Hebrew names, which were soon forgotten. Thus the Hebrew name Yoseph (Joseph) was corrupted into Yosel, Jesselman, and other forms; Jacob (Yaakov) became Yekel, Yankel, Kopel, Kopelman, etc.; Samuel (Schmuel) became Shmulik, Sanvill, Zavill, Zangwill, etc.; Isaac (Yitzchak) became Eisnik, Itzik, Itzl, Zekl, etc.

The Jewish names which the Ashkenazim adopted in conformity with the above-mentioned rabbinic ordinance (*Takkanah*) were related in a variety of ways to their non-Jewish names:

1. In many cases they were a direct translation into Hebrew of the German names. The German Baer, for example, was translated by Dov, so that a Jew of this name became Dov Ber, or, in its syncopated form, Duber. The popular German name Hirsch was translated by Zvi, which yielded the dual form Zvi Hirsch. Gottlieb became Yedidiah Gottlieb; Bendit (a form of Benedict)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

became Baruch, in its dual form Baruch Bendit. Phoebus (the Greek god of light!) was translated by the Aramaic Shraga or Hebrew Uri, becoming Uri Phoebus and Shraga Phoebus, which in turn changed into Uri Feivish or Uri Feivel. A popular diminutive of the German Gottfried was Gotze; this was corrupted into Goetzl or Getzel, which was translated as Eliakim, and many Jews are called Eliakim Getz or Getzl.

2. A second way for inventing Jewish names called into play the skill in casuistry which Jews had developed by study of the Talmud. In the Bible certain names are found in association with certain terms. For example, Judah is called *gur aryeh,* a lion. A Jew called Loeb (lion in German) would therefore adopt as his Hebrew name Judah or Aryeh; this gave him as his full name Judah Layb or Aryeh Layb. Hertz (hart) became Naphtali Hertz, for the patriarch Jacob in blessing Naphtali calls him a swift-footed hart. In the same way, Wolff became Benjamin Wolff. And because Jacob said to Ephraim that his seed would multiply as the fish in the sea, the popular German name Fischlin became Ephraim Fischel.

3. Finally, mere similarity of sound with one's German name was a sufficient warrant for adopting a Hebrew name. The French *bon homme* was popular as a name among the German Jews in the form of Bunim. Phonetically it was related to Benjamin; therefore a German Jew whose *kinnui* was Bunim took Benjamin as his *shem-hakodesh,* his name becoming Benjamin Bunim. The old German name Mann, whose diminutive is Mannish or Mendel, was associated with the Hebrew Menachem, the result of which was Menachem Mendel. The Germanic Anselm was adopted in the corrupted form of Anschel and linked with the Hebrew Asher to become Asher Anschel.

In many instances, however, a Hebrew name was conjoined with a non-Jewish name in a purely arbitrary fashion, without any logical or phonetic warrant.

While only a few of the many Italian and French names that Jews have used have came down to us, almost all the German names are with us in one form or another, in large part because the Yiddish language came to us from German Jewry.

One of the chief factors that preserved the Hebrew character of Jewish names was the rabbinical requirement of a Hebrew name for synagogue and other religious purposes; but since women did not participate in religious activities and were not called up to read the Torah, it is no surprise to discover that the feminine names of this era were predominantly non-Jewish. One looks at lists of feminine Jewish names and finds the strangest conglomeration of corruptions and diminutives, borrowings and mutations. They are a weird cacophony of sounds to modern ears, if we are ignorant of their provenance and of the metamorphoses they have undergone. Some of these are Trestel (from the German *Troest,* consolation, used for the Hebrew name Nechama, which also means consolation); Kreindel (from the German *Krone,* crown); Breindel (from the German *braune,* brunette); Treindel (from Trina, the diminutive of Katarina); Dvoshke (corrupted form of Devora); Tzirel (from Sarah); Rayzel (from Rosa); Mindel (from Minne, the diminutive of Wilhelmina).

In all fairness to our forefathers, however, it must be stated that even in the Middle Ages the Jew coined new Hebrew names, and even for their daughters. This was truer of the Italian Jews and other Sephardic communities than for the Ashkenazim, who allowed accident and circumstance to distort their names out of all recognition.

NAMES brought by Jewish immigrants from one country to another were changed to suit the tastes and fancy of the Jews among whom they settled. In this way, the Jews in Germany took over the name of the French and English Jews who fled their way in the later Middle Ages, and altered both their sound and spelling. Polish Jews "improved" on Italian and German names. This went on from one generation to the next until hardly a trace of the original name remained. For this reason it is difficult today to determine the origins of many names. Who would ever

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

guess that Shprinzel is a Polish Jewish "improvement" on Esperanza, brought east by Italian Jews? It was a regular practice for the Jews of Italy to translate the Hebrew Tikvah into Esperanza. Or how discover that the name Feitel is a German Jewish corruption of the Italian Vital, itself a translation of the Hebrew Chayim? The popular Yiddish Zelde is the old German name Salida; Gimpel comes from Gumprecht; poor, banal Yente had an exotic origin in Juanita; the wretched Yachne is the Biblical Yocheved. These metamorphoses can be recounted by the hundreds. But for every name we can trace back, there are dozens whose origins are lost.

On the American scene today, we follow many of the practices established by our forefathers long ago. We still translate and assimilate names. In contemporary America it is common to give a child an English name whose initial letter is the same as that of his Hebrew name. Thus a boy who inherits the Hebrew name of Abraham from his grandfather will have Allen, Arthur, or Avery for his English name; a girl named Shaindel after her grandmother is called Susan, Sandra, or Shirley in English.

In Israel, Jewish patriotism expresses itself in much the same way as it did in the days of the first Return under Ezra. Names are devised or changed in Israel according to certain definite procedures which can be summed up as follows:

1. Elimination of Diaspora influences and admixtures. Jewish names are purged of all the "foreign" accretions that were acquired while living in the Dispersion. The original Hebrew component, if missing, is restored; if present, it is left standing alone. Thus, Mendel disappears and Menachem remains; Feivel is dropped and Uri is reinstated; Judeo-Polish Zlate and German Golde are changed to Zahava; Gitel becomes Tova, Shaindel becomes Yaffa, etc.

2. Ransacking of the Bible and Hebrew literary sources for names for children. So strong is this preference for Biblical names that no attention is paid to whether they are pre-Patriarchal or post-Patriarchal, Hebrew, or heathen. Even ancient Hebrew names for things and objects are made use of. The only criteria are euphony, simplicity, and brevity. Some of these new names are Alon, Aran, Aviv, Ofra, Kochevet.

3. Coinages. New names are being created in every walk of life. These names express the sentiments, hopes, and impulses of a people restored to the land of their forefathers, and recall the era of the return following the Babylonian captivity. Some of these names are: Yigal (he will redeem), Geula (redemption), Ron (he sings), Zimra (song), Shira (song), Aviva (spring).

IT LOOKS as though our present increasing desire to identify ourselves as Jewish will lead us to adopt more traditionally Jewish first names in the future. But the choice will necessarily be limited by what English-speaking people happen to find euphonious. Whether we can expand that notion of euphony in naming our children remains to be seen.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

THE UPTOWN SOCIAL CLUB

"It Is Not Good That Man Should Be Alone"

THEODORE FRANKEL

EVERY Friday the New York *Post* carries at least fifty advertisements inviting single people under and over twenty-eight years of age to public dances held in hotels and Jewish centers all over town. Ostensibly addressed to the public at large, these advertisements are aimed, in fact, at Jewish readers of the *Post*. There are, to be sure, a handful of non-Jewish organizations, such as the Knights of Columbus, that also advertise their dances and affairs in the daily newspapers, but their ads are small and few, tucked away on a back page of the *Daily News*.

The advertisements in the *Post* are many and large. In a good number the affiliation is self-evident: either the location or the sponsorship of the dance proclaims it. In one Friday issue of the *Post*, for instance, public dances were advertised to be held on the premises of the Ocean Avenue Jewish Center, the Rego Park Jewish Center, the Hillcrest Jewish Center, Temple Adath Israel, and similar places—fifteen in all. There were also dances sponsored by the National Fraternal Zionists, the Young Israel of the Concourse, B'nai B'rith, and numerous other Jewish organizations. Dances under commercial sponsorship are identified as to Jewish character indirectly, the favorite device being a menorah placed somewhere in the ad. Thus an ad for a dance at the Hotel Biltmore, featuring the band of Tito Puente —"in person all eve, or money refunded"— carried a single menorah at bottom center, that for a dance at the Hotel McAlpin showed two, one in each upper corner. On Jewish holidays the *Post* blossoms forth with announcements of Purim, Chanukah, Passover, and even pre-Passover and pre-Purim dances.

Who can tell exactly how many people attend these functions? Attendance fluctuates sharply with the weather, and there is a good deal of overlapping, with some going to more than one dance a week, but it is probably not exaggerated to say that on a fair weekend at least twenty thousand unmarried and unattached Jewish young men and women pay anywhere from fifty cents to two dollars for the opportunity of dancing with strangers.

There would seem little to choose from among the advertisements. Some favor the outspoken approach, others are coyer. One club, for example, advertised itself as "Intimate Yet Room for *1250 People!*" There are also a number of dances, mostly for the age group tactfully designated as over twenty-eight, which are run in conjunction with lectures. Representative titles of these lectures are: "Your Nervous Tension—Its Cause and Cure"; "How to Forget the Past and Start Life Afresh"; "How to Find a Husband in 60 Days"; "Pardon Me—Your Personality Is Showing"; "How to be an Interesting Person"; "The Kinsey Report—Revisited."

Most advertisements manage to find space

THIS is THEODORE FRANKEL's first appearance in COMMENTARY, although he has already contributed to such periodicals as *Jewish Frontier* and the Chicago *Jewish Forum*. He was born in Berlin in 1922 and came to this country in 1939, where he got his B.A. at Yeshiva University and his M.A. at Columbia. He lives in New York and supports himself as a free-lance writer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between their protestations of intimacy, the menorahs, and the names of featured band leaders for the prosaic details of location and fee. Not so a club which I shall call the Uptown Club, which, at the time I saw its ad, announced a "Purim Party in Our Elegant Clubrooms at a Fashionable Hotel —Where the Better Class of People (20-35) Meet." Telephone numbers were listed, but the name of the hotel was not given, and no mention of any admission charge.

I had heard of this club before. Someone who knew that I had been disappointed by my experiences at the usual commercial dances had advised me to try the Uptown. "For one thing," my friend had said, "they don't let just anybody in, particularly with the girls. Most of the members are in their twenties and there aren't any of those forty-year-old spinsters you find around at the other dances." At my request he mentioned me to the club's president, whom I shall call Sam Fine. Mr. Fine said I should come up and see him at his office in the hotel.

I found myself several days later on my way to the "fashionable hotel" in which the Uptown Club meets, on a street in Manhattan's mid-Eighties between Broadway and West End Avenue, a neighborhood once fashionable but now rapidly running down.

I found Mr. Fine's hotel in keeping with the neighborhood. The stately turrets and arches of its façade, originally meant to be imposing, were now thick with the long accumulated grime of the city. Inside, the lobby was spacious enough, and an intricately carved railing, expensive-looking and glossy with age, ran along the stairs leading to the mezzanine; but the rugs were threadbare, the elevators creaked, and the uniforms of the elevator men were shiny.

I got off at the fifth floor and, following the instructions of the elevator man, stumbled through a dimly lit corridor, past a good-sized wedding hall, and finally into the club office, where I was waved to a chair by Mr. Sam Fine, who at the moment was speaking simultaneously over three telephones. In the center of the office a slim brown-haired girl sat at a table, going painstakingly through index cards filed in long, yellow boxes. When Mr. Fine finished, he came over and shook hands with me. He was a cheerful, stocky man in his early forties, obviously practiced at putting people at their ease. "Meet Rosabelle," he said, nodding toward the girl at the table. "She became a member only yesterday and already I have appointed her co-chairman of our musicale committee. Now she is looking through our membership files for people with talent." Rosabelle shot me a searching look. "Not me," I said.

MR. FINE rubbed his eyes. "I'm bushed," he announced, looking remarkably alert. "You know, being president of the Uptown Club is only one of my activities. I am also president of a women's athletic club, president of a lecture group, president of a youth temple, and treasurer of a speakers' association. Back in the 30's I was also the coach of a Maccabi team. All this really keeps me on the run. Now what do you want to know about the Uptown Club?" "As much as possible," I said. "In that case," he replied, "I'd better give you the indoctrination lecture I give to new members on Friday nights." He got up, crossed over to a television set which stood against a wall, adopted a lecturer's stance and began: "This all started ten years ago when I was running around with a crowd of young fellows. We were drifting around from place to place, trying to get some fun and fellowship, attempting to satisfy our basic social needs, you know, meeting a better class of people, getting to know nice girls. At first we went to the usual Saturday night dances—the rat races we used to call them. But we did not like the atmosphere and we did not like the people we met there, the boys were all operators and the girls were gold-diggers and everybody was looking for a rich boy or a rich girl. The result was that everybody you met was on the make and, wherever you went, you met the same element. Of course, my friends and I were always trying to improve ourselves. We heard about private parties and we wangled introductions for ourselves, but when we got there we found out soon enough that at these so-called private parties we ran into the same faces we knew from the public dances. Then somebody had the bright idea of applying for membership at the Junior League of Temple Emanu-El where all the rich German Jews belong. We really thought we had hit it that time. With high expectations we went to one of their dances, but lo and behold! the sons and daughters of the rich senior

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

members did not belong to the Junior League. Who belonged to the Junior League of Temple Emanu-El, the richest temple in the world, but people just like us, sons and daughters of poor Polish Jews from the Lower East Side, all trying to meet a better class of people and ending up with each other. The worst part of it was that these people were so entrenched in office, they would not let anybody else in. When we saw we could not crack Temple Emanu-El we tried Temple Rodeph Sholom. Our luck there was no better." He smiled the satisfied smile of a successful man looking back on the struggles of his youth. But he added quickly: "I didn't really mind. I once went to their services and saw that the men wore no hats and that men and women sat together. You know, I was really shocked. Where I come from, we wore *yarmelkes* in *shul* and men and women sat separate. I'm a funny kind of Jew: I'll eat *treife* meat, but I won't have milk with it, and I don't think I'd have taken to those people."

Their attempts to improve themselves via Temple Emanu-El and Rodeph Sholom having failed, Mr. Fine and his friends now lowered their social sights and, without difficulty, joined the Junior League of a small Orthodox synagogue. This time they succeeded only too well. Mr. Fine, a natural organizer, took over organizing the Junior League dances with huge success, and at the year's end he had himself elected president of the League, with the aid of his numerous friends. This called forth a considerable amount of resentment on the part of the long-time members of the synagogue; after a protracted struggle, Mr. Fine and his friends found themselves homeless again.

"I said, 'It's back to the rat races, boys,'" Mr. Fine recalled, but apparently his skill as organizer had been recognized and his friends and acquaintances were pressing him to run his own club. He finally gave in. "And so it came about," Mr. Fine ended, "that one autumn evening seven of us got together at Elman's Restaurant, which is no longer, and there in the mezzanine we decided to found a club of our own. We each contributed five dollars in cash and pledged each other our faith and loyalty. And today we have more than three thousand members and over twenty thousand dollars in our building fund."

At this point the telephone rang, and Mr. Fine went over to answer it. "Uptown Club," he said in his high-pitched voice which rose with a cheerful, almost jaunty intonation. Then he gave out the club's location, laughed with quite genuine humor, and said: "Well, we are not as classy as all that. Don't worry, dear, just come over. I am sure you will like the club and the club will like you. Just ask for me, Sam Fine." He hung up, returned, and sat down. Then he said: "When my friends and I founded the Uptown Club we wanted something that was different from the run-of-the-mill commercial dance. We wanted to create a club atmosphere where refined young Jewish people could satisfy their basic social needs in a congenial atmosphere of fun and fellowship. We wanted more than just another rat race, we wanted to integrate our people in a Jewish atmosphere. For this reason we have a great many cultural activities, we have lectures at every meeting, we organized a trip to the Touro synagogue, we have had hayrides, musicals, and other activities which give those of our members who are leadership types a chance to become leaders and to gain recognition from the community." I broke in to ask how the club actually functioned. Mr. Fine said: "We are a non-profit, tax-exempt Jewish membership organization. Our aims are philanthropic. Our basic activity is, of course, our weekly dance which takes place every Sunday night in our club rooms on the sixth floor. Most of those who come are old members, but when new people arrive, they are handed an application blank which they must fill out. They are then and there interviewed by our membership committee, pay $1.50 entrance fee, and go in. If they are acceptable they receive by mail a letter of acceptance, otherwise they receive a letter of rejection." Mr. Fine smiled. "Believe me," he said, "our letter of rejection is stiffer than the one I got from Rodeph Sholom." He continued: "Once people are accepted, they are members. We have two types of members, full members who pay the $15 annual fee all at once and those members who mature their membership gradually by paying one dollar every time they attend a dance." I asked how many members were fully paid up. "Out of three thousand members," Mr. Fine said a little ruefully, "only

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one hundred have their memberships fully matured." I noticed that he invariably used the phrase "maturing a membership" rather than "paying up," and that his vocabulary leaned heavily to such expressions as "satisfying basic social needs—communal integration—fun and fellowship in a boy meets girl situation." "The meeting and mating needs of young people" fell from Mr. Fine's lips with a curiously chaste, scientific sound. Another favorite of his was: "recognition from the community." This phrase came up when I asked him about the salaries of the people running the club. "None whatsoever," he replied promptly. "All of the officers are elected by the full members and donate their services. The one emolument they get is the satisfaction of a job well done and recognition from the community." I asked Mr. Fine how much time he personally put in. "On the Uptown Club, five full working days a week," he replied. Later I learned that Mr. Fine had no other employment and that he devoted all of his time, including Saturdays and Sundays, to his various self-imposed social obligations.

I was ready to take my leave when Mr. Fine invited me to a directors' meeting that Friday night. He also gave me some literature about the club, including an application blank. The application asked for name, address, telephone number, education, hobbies, and membership in other organizations. The final question read: "Are you a member of the Jewish faith?" and beneath was the following oath: "I swear I am not a member of the Communist Party, an anarchist, atheist, subversive or opposed to American democratic ideals and way of government." I remarked that this seemed a rather strong oath to have to swear to just to get into a social club. Mr. Fine waved his hand deprecatingly: "This is just a piece of reverse psychology. We used to have a lot of trouble getting signatures before we put this oath in, people were afraid we might be Communists and didn't want to sign. Now we put the burden of proof on them and they sign like lambs."

On our way out Mr. Fine took me on a tour of the clubrooms, a flight or so above the office. There was a large lobby with a great many sofas and chairs standing about irregularly. Running parallel to the lobby were two narrower rooms. One was used for lectures and the other as a TV and game room. In the latter were a number of small card tables—but there was no gambling, said Mr. Fine—and in the lecture hall orderly rows of chairs confronted a raised lectern and a microphone. At the end of these three rooms, running crossways to them, was the large dance hall. It was quite empty now, except for a bandstand in one corner and a single row of chairs along the walls. I felt chilly and we walked out.

THE following Friday night, when I returned to the office, it was filled with approximately twenty people lounging around the long center table which was covered with white linen. At a smaller table near the door two young men and a blond girl were playing cards, and looking for a fourth hand; everybody else was smoking and chatting.

The meeting started almost an hour late, but once under way, it proceeded smoothly. The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved, the treasurer made his report from a slip furnished him by Sam Fine, chairmen reported on their committees, mostly announcing negative results: the musicale had no talent, the drama group had folded, there was to be no hayride and so forth. A good number of chairmen, almost twenty it seemed, had not even bothered to show up and Sam Fine announced their absence amid general and indulgent laughter. Subsequently new members to the board of directors were nominated and voted on. The meeting ran very quickly under Fine's strong, yet good humored and pliable chairmanship. There were only two touchy moments.

The first occurred when one of the board members rose to make a motion to admit to the club all applicants regardless of their race or creed. Somebody else immediately moved to table the motion, was seconded, and the original motion was promptly and decisively removed from the evening's agenda. It was as adroit a bit of steam-rollering as I had ever witnessed anywhere.

The second uncomfortable moment came during the president's report. "We have now some three thousand members," Fine said at one point, "but only one hundred have their memberships fully matured, which means that the other two thousand nine hundred members pay only when they attend, which

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

may be three or four times a year. What can we do so that these people can profit from all the cultural activities, from the Jewish atmosphere we could establish here?

There followed some animated but rather disorganized discussion which drifted to the conclusion that under the circumstances nothing much could be done. Finally a tall young man, who later identified himself to me as something of an authority on social activities in New York, took the floor. Looking meaningfully at Sam Fine, he said: "There has been a great deal of talk around here about integration into the community, service to Jewish life, the satisfaction of social needs and so forth, but that is all talk. Superficially we may be organized as a social club, and to the directors this may seem a great organization. But let's face it: the people who come to our dances do not consider themselves members just because they have signed an application. To them we are just another rat race. All those ads about the better class of people you meet at the Uptown make me laugh; we get the same office girls and salesmen that go to all the other dances. And you must remember one thing: the people who come to us and to all the other dances are the lonely and the rejected, the misfits and the neurotic, the boys who have no dates and the girls who have been looking for husbands for years. And after they come to a dance they feel worse than before. You can say what you want, we have the same slave market atmosphere as all the other dances: the girls are being looked over by the boys and hate every minute of it, and the boys, many of whom are rejected by the girls, get even worse inferiority complexes than they had when they came in. It's one big vicious circle."

He had hardly finished when Sam Fine, forgetting for once his role as suave and impartial chairman, was on his feet, shouting: "You are dead wrong. Our members may not belong to the Four Hundred but they are not misfits either. They are good Jewish boys and girls who come here to fulfill their social needs, to meet each other in an atmosphere of fun and fellowship. They are not neurotic and they are not maladjusted. These people have a very real problem in finding a place where they can meet other young people. From the time they leave school to the time that they get married, their social life lacks a natural focus. They are left to themselves and as a consequence they drift around aimlessly. The synagogues ought to step in, but most of them don't. That's why you have all those public dances with their unhealthy, commercial atmosphere. Now we have tried to have something better here, we may not always succeed as much as we would like to, but a great many people are putting in a great deal of time and effort, trying awfully hard." He paused for a moment, then continued more calmly: "One more thing. We may have some wise guys and a couple of neurotics, like every other organization. But 99 per cent of our membership are nice and normal boys and girls from decent Jewish homes." And he sat down amid general approbation.

After the meeting most of the directors went to a cafeteria around the corner. I asked Sam Fine about the resolution to admit all applicants regardless of creed and race. He smiled. "Look," he said, "when my friends and I founded this club, we wanted a Jewish social club. Now we have this new faction that brings up this issue every other meeting. They pose as big idealists and sound off about discrimination and bigotry and what have you. That's all nonsense. I have asked big lawyers and they told me no discrimination was involved. If these guys want to go out with girls of other faiths, good luck to them, but not in the Uptown. We want to keep our Jewish atmosphere." He turned to the young man who had sponsored the motion. "Paul," he said, "you can bring this thing to a vote any time you please, I'll just roll over you."

I was quite surprised at Fine's vehemence on that subject because I knew that the other Jewish dances had no restrictions and still remained distinctly Jewish. I mentioned this to Fine and he said: "You are right, and I am not afraid of the occasional Gentile who would come to our dance, but this is a matter of principle. You may have noticed that, by and large, the Gentiles do not have public dances like we do, most of their dances are sponsored by their local churches. I as a Jew would feel out of place at their dance, so why should they come to mine? Besides, most of our girls come to a dance to find a husband. Now you know that these Gentile boys do not come to our dances to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

find wives." "How about the Jewish boys," I asked, "are their intentions any more honorable?" "Well, no," Fine conceded, "but at least they are Jewish boys and, whatever their original intentions may be, quite a few of them do marry the girls they meet at our dances. But what happens if a Gentile boy should marry a Jewish girl he met at our dance? The mother comes up and weeps to me and eats my heart out. Do I need it?"

THE following Sunday night at nine o'clock in the evening I rode up in the ancient elevator of the club's hotel. My fellow passengers included a number of high-spirited young men, freshly shaved and smelling of lotions, as well as a group of four young ladies who had obviously arrived together. I particularly noticed one of the girls, a petite brunette in a handsome and (it seemed to me) unusual leather coat. The elevator disgorged us directly into the lobby of the club. I hardly recognized it. When I had seen it last, it had been dark and deserted, but now it was alive with lights and young people. Two long tables had been placed across the width of the room, leaving only a narrow opening for us to enter. Directly in this passageway stood Sam Fine, resplendent in a dark suit and wearing a large badge with the inscription: SAM FINE, PRESIDENT, UPTOWN CLUB. He was flanked by several other dignitaries with similar badges, disclosing their various offices. As new arrivals tried to enter they were directed by Sam Fine to the two tables, one for the men and the other for the women, where they filled out the application blanks if they had come for the first time, or paid their dues if they were members. They were then passed through with a greeting or a pat on the back by Mr. Fine. The girls were handed a slip of mimeographed paper which read: "Tonight's feature . . . *for female members only*. Girls! Promptly at 9:30 P.M. gather in the auditorium. . . . You can learn something in just half an hour about self-help in maintaining your present weight (or losing pounds). No Diet List . . . No Exercises . . . No Drugs . . . No Pills. . . ."

I showed the slip to Sam Fine. He shrugged his shoulders. "This lecture will flop for sure," he said. "No girl will enter that lecture hall if there are no fellows there. But the lecturer thinks he knows better than I. He'll find out."

The lobby was full of people and every few minutes I could hear the elevator bring up more. The girls were sitting, alone or in pairs, on chairs and sofas and the men were standing, singly, along the walls. There was, as yet, very little getting together, although here and there a couple chatted with the air of being old and intimate friends. I noticed that almost everybody was chewing gum and I was to see later that they did not relinquish their wads even on the dance floor; more than once I was treated to the sight of a couple dancing cheek to cheek, their jaws moving furiously and in perfect rhythm to the music. There was a good deal of noise in the room, music could be heard from the dance hall in the back, a loudspeaker was blaring over the crowd, urging people to attend the lecture, and a constant babble of voices could be heard at the entrance where new arrivals were being met by the membership committee. I could hear the TV set going strong in the game room and I went in. All the card tables were occupied, mostly by mixed couples, and I surmised that these might be some of the married members who had met here and now kept returning, moved by nostalgia and habit. Later my guess was confirmed. Off in one corner, a mixed doubles were playing an earnest if awkward game of ping-pong, surrounded by a great many kibitzers who, however, looked away frequently toward the door to scan any new arrivals.

I drifted back to the main lobby and peeked through the half-open door into the lecture hall. It was almost empty. When I returned half an hour later, the lecture had started, but of the more than two hundred girls at the dance only about a dozen were in attendance. By now the crowd was emptying out of the lobby into the dance hall. I went to the small bar, which dispensed soft drinks only, and watched the dancers. I remembered the heated discussion at the directors' meeting about the character of those who came to the club, but I must say I saw little evidence to support the view of the young man who had insisted the dances were overrun by the rejected and maladjusted. True, there were a lot of plain-looking girls, but there were also a good many attractive ones and several who were very

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pretty, even beautiful. All the girls were well groomed, only a few overdoing the mascara. The men, too, seemed a perfectly representative group and I saw little evidence of exaggerated behavior. And when, several days later, I went through the membership files, I saw by the application cards that most of the men had, or at least claimed, several years of college education and a considerable percentage alleged to holding professional jobs. The girls, though, were almost overwhelmingly recruited from the ranks of secretaries, bookkeepers, and office clerks of high school education.

I detached myself from the bar and went into the dance hall. A three-piece band was playing and about twenty couples were on the floor dancing. Up on the ceiling a multicolored light slowly rotated, throwing its garish hues on the dancers below. Along the walls girls sat on stiff-backed chairs, looking non-committal in their fine clothes, while the men stood in a thick and lonely crowd next to the door. I went over to a girl and asked her for a dance. She gave me a quick, appraising look, smiled, and said: "No, thank you." I confess I was embarrassed, and I turned away, feeling the stares of the bystanders in my back. I joined the crowd of men at the door, waiting a while to recover my composure. All about me young men, aged, I should guess, from twenty to thirty-five, stood around, hands in their pockets, smoking or chewing gum. Every so often one of them would detach himself, amble around the room, look the girls over, ask one for a dance, or rejoin the crowd. There was almost no conversation among the men, each seemed shut up in a cage of his private calculations. From time to time one of them would burst out with a biting remark directed at the girls, and a spurious feeling of comradeship would quickly rise to the surface, but be gone before it had even been noticed. The tension was almost palpable. Next to me, a small dapper man who had just been rejected by a girl said with vehemence: "What ugly heads [dance hall slang for girls] they have in this joint."

THE air was slowly becoming stuffy and a fine haze of cigarette smoke had settled over the hall. More and more people crowded the floor, it was already quite difficult to dance, and the more skillful dancers, needing more room, had moved to the back of the hall where they had full freedom to execute their fancy steps. I was wandering about when I came upon the pretty girl I had noticed in the elevator. She was sitting on a chair along the wall, trying not to look disappointed and bored. I sat down on the empty chair next to her; she gave me that quick appraising glance that apparently is standard operating procedure for girls in these situations and continued smoking. "Hello," I said. "Didn't I see you in the elevator? I believe you wore a rather unusual leather coat." "What's so unusual about it?" she replied with a brusqueness that took me aback. "Downtown they sell them by the thousands." "Oh, I don't know," I said, and we fell silent for a long minute. "Would you care to dance?" I said finally. "I haven't finished with my cigarette," she said, a little testily. "Then finish it," I said masterfully, "and let's dance." "Listen," she said as we were putting our arms around each other on the dance floor, "I must warn you, I'm a rotten dancer." So she was, and throughout the dance she kept stumbling all over me. When it was finally over I led her back to her chair, nodded, and walked away without saying a word, as I had seen others of the men do.

I was on my way to rejoin the brotherhood at the door when I bumped into a tall, good-looking brunette who was standing on the dance floor, swinging her hips to the rhythm of a fast rhumba. "Dance?" I said. "Love to," she said, and off we went. Almost immediately, I realized that I was way out of my class. The girl had a full repertoire of fancy steps which I could not hope to keep up with. After the first few bars of music she shook loose from me and, as is the fashion nowadays, danced out on the floor by herself and went through a sequence of amazing gyrations. Her healthy young body writhed uninhibitedly, but with astonishing control, her arms flailed the air, and her shapely legs stamped the floor. I felt like a stick standing there, watching her spin around me. Fortunately just then the band broke into a fast mambo, and a slick young man cut in on me. His hair was glossy with pomade, his white tie and shirt luminous against his black suit. "Dance?" he said. "Love to," she said, and off they went.

By now the dance floor was jammed, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the stag line near the door and the number of solitary girls sitting on their uncomfortable chairs had not diminished. The pattern as a whole remained fixed, whatever the individuals chose to do. One fellow who had been standing by himself all evening would suddenly plunge into the dance with a girl, while another, who had tired of his partner, would return to the hive. Some changed roles and partners a good many times, others kept to the same girl or to themselves all evening; but the configuration was always essentially the same. I found myself, at one point, next to a tall, no longer young man, whose gray temples and lean figure gave him a distinguished look oddly distorted by his nervous habit of chewing. He was impeccably dressed in brown, with shoes, socks, suit, shirt, and tie blending harmoniously. He nodded in the direction of a cluster of girls and said cheerfully: "There ought to be a winner in that bunch." I asked him whether he liked it here. "Hell, yes," he said, "I've been a paid-up member for five years. Wouldn't miss it for anything," and he strode over to the girls, grasped one firmly by the wrist, and made for the dance floor.

He never quite reached it, though, because the music stopped suddenly and Sam Fine appeared on the stand to announce the start of the amateur talent show. Amid considerable confusion chairs were brought out onto the floor and the show got under way, Fine serving as a smooth and experienced master of ceremonies. There were thirteen candidates, twelve men and one girl, all of them singers and all performing with a poise and assurance that bespoke at least semi-professional experience. The audience was, by and large, attentive, even through a steady undercurrent of whispering and small talk. I watched the show for a while, admiring the skill with which the singers cued the orchestra. Most of the selections were popular hits, but one stoutish young man announced that he would sing "Eli, Eli." At this point I decided that I had seen enough and began to grope my way out. As I squeezed my way through the knot of men at the door, I heard the singer warbling: *Mit feier un flam hot men uns ge-e-ebrent.* His voice shook in a well-practiced tremulo.

THE lobby was cool and airy after the smoky dance hall. It was not empty, though; several couples were sitting around, some of them holding hands. In the TV room the set was still blaring and the card players kept their eyes riveted on their cards. Off in a corner I spotted a lone young man whom I recognized as a casual acquaintance. I went over to him and, after the usual exchange of greetings and expressions of surprise, asked him how he liked the Uptown Club. He scratched his head a little sheepishly and said: "I don't really have to come up here, at home I have a book full of addresses. But this place is convenient and inexpensive. I don't have to call for a girl, I don't have to spend any money on her. I live in the neighborhood, so I come up. And once you come up, you must come again, it's like a drug. You know how it is," he said, a little apologetically, "you sit by yourself in a furnished room, you have nobody to talk to, you're too tired to read. That loneliness can drive you crazy. So you come up here; they have girls, music, a crowd of people, it makes the evening go by." "Do you find this place any different?" I asked, thinking of Sam Fine's emphasis on the distinctive club atmosphere. "Do you feel that you're a member and belong?" I continued. "No," he said. "I don't feel that the Uptown is any different from any other dance. As a matter of fact, I meet many of the same faces that I see here at the other dances. You see that girl over there?" he continued, pointing to an ash-blonde who was whispering intimately with a sharp-featured young man. "Last Saturday night I met her at a dance in Long Island. A real jerky dame," he added venomously. "Tell me," I said, "how do you approach these girls, how do you go about picking one up? I've had some difficulty." "You've got to have a line," he answered without hesitation. "Now, my line is that I am the shy type. That gives the girls more confidence. The fact is that I am a little shy by nature and that I'm not a good dancer, so I stay away from the dance floor and I stay away from the glamor girls. I look around till I find a nice, quiet girl who is rather plain and who looks lonely. That type does not reject you so fast. Then I sit down next to her and start a conversation; sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't." He shrugged his shoulders. Then he said: "My motto is: Forget what happened yesterday, live every day as it comes."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Just then the doors of the dance hall opened and spectators and contestants came streaming out. I left my friend who suddenly had become very fidgety. I understood; after all, it was getting late and he had not yet picked up a girl. For that matter, neither had I.

I returned to the dance hall. Some of the brighter lights had been turned off, the band was resting after the show, and a tinny rhumba melody came from a record player. Off in the darker corners there was some close dancing and suppressed giggling. In a short while the lights turned bright again, and the dance floor filled up again. I began to make out individual personalities: the vivacious, Junoesque blonde in the tight-fitting red dress who never missed a dance, the swarthy young "operator" who knew all the latest steps, the girl whose face was spotted with acne and who stood unasked in the same corner throughout the long evening, the scholarly looking boy with eyes like boiled eggs behind thick glasses.

I DECIDED to follow the example of my shy friend and try my luck with one of the lonely girls. I went over to one who looked considerably older than the rest—I guessed her age as about thirty-five—and asked her for a dance. She gave me the ritual once-over and, either satisfied with what she saw or feeling that she was in no position to be choosy, rose slowly, deposited her gum with one dexterous motion under the seat of her chair, and followed me to the dance floor.

I introduced myself and learned that her name was Doris. We danced for a while without talking. When a fast mambo came up we sat it out and chatted. She had an open and unaffected attitude that made me feel at home with her. When I asked her whether she liked these dances, she said: "Are you kidding? Show me a girl that likes being looked over like a piece of merchandise." I told her I thought the girls did quite a bit of looking-over themselves. "Why not?" she said. "After all, nobody likes being stuck with a jerk all night. And once you dance with a guy, it is embarrassing to get rid of him." I asked her how the Uptown Club compared with other dances. She said she liked it better than most, there were more activities. "Years ago," she added, "it was really nice. They had a more refined crowd. But now they are getting an awful lot of fresh young kids in. Why, the other day I was standing here with my girl friend and a kid came over, put his arms around us, and kissed us. I looked at him, at home he must be the shyest thing, but here he thinks he must prove he is a man. Now don't get me wrong," she added hastily, "most of the fellows that come here are gentlemen." Her brows crinkled. "But an awful lot are jerks."

We danced again and then went into the lobby. "I don't really like to go to these dances," Doris confided to me, "but my mother keeps pushing me. Maybe she's right, last year my girl friend Ruth went to a dance and the first half hour she meets a fellow. Right away he says to her: 'You are the girl for me, I'm going to marry you.' She just laughed at him, but sure enough, two months later they got married. Just goes to show you." She turned to me: "What do you do for a living?" When I had satisfied her on that count, she said: "I haven't seen you here before. Do you come often? I usually come here once every couple of weeks." (I learned later that it is common practice among the girls not to frequent the same dance too often because they don't want to let it appear that they have no dates and are dependent on the dances.) "It's getting late," I said. "I am afraid I'll have to go home." "Me too," said Doris. "Tomorrow I have to make out the payroll. Will you be here next Sunday?" I said I didn't know. "Why don't you take my telephone number?" Doris asked. I took out my little black book and wrote down her number, but it was no good, the rapport between us had broken. I knew she was disappointed and angry with me for making her take the first step, and she sensed my embarrassment. We walked out silently, eager to get away from each other.

At the door we encountered Sam Fine, who was saying good night to the crowd rapidly melting away. Sammy looked chipper and happy. When he saw me in the company of the girl, he winked. "Come up again," he crooned. "Fun and fellowship."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CEDARS OF LEBANON

ARGUMENT FOR THE IMMORTAL SOUL

The Heretical "Voice of the Fool" Speaks

THE following selection is taken from a Hebrew manuscript first published by the Italian Jewish scholar Isaac S. Reggio, at Gorizia, in 1852 in his book *Behinath ha-Kabbalah*. The manuscript contains a violent attack against rabbinic Judaism, supposedly written by one Ammittai bar Yeda'iah ibn Raz, together with a defense of Jewish tradition from the pen of Rabbi Leon da Modena. The title given to this attack, *Kol Sakhal*—"The Voice of the Fool"—is manifestly not the one chosen by its author, but reflects the reaction of a traditionalist Jew to its contents.

For a long time the scholarly world had accepted Reggio's suggestion that the colorful Venetian rabbi, Leon da Modena (1571-1648), was the author not only of the refutation, but also of the attack itself, and that the latter reflects his real, though concealed, views. Of late, however, attempts have been made to deny da Modena's authorship of the *Kol Sakhal*. Isaiah Sonne endeavors to trace the work back to the heresiarch of 17th-century Amsterdam, Uriel da Costa; while Ellis Rivkin has devoted a whole book (*Leon da Modena and the Kol Sakhal*, Cincinnati 1952) to proving his contention that da Modena was a sincere champion of tradition who, in all honesty, objected to the contents of the *Kol Sakhal*.

Whoever the author, "The Voice of the Fool" is a fascinating document of the 17th century, a period of Jewish history which has given us, on the one hand, men like Uriel da Costa and Spinoza, and, on the other, a pseudo-Messiah like Sabbatai Zevi. It was an age characterized—to use the phrase of the historian Graetz—by its "agitators." Judaism had yet to make its adjustments to the new spirit of the times.

The *Kol Sakhal* consists of three parts. In the first, from which the selection here is taken, the author states his theological position. In the second he attacks the belief in an Oral Law on historical grounds. In the third he voices his objections to some specific details of rabbinic law. My translation, the first, I believe, into English, is based on the text by Reggio.—JAKOB J. PETUCHOWSKI

JUST as, from the point of view of sense perception, we have no reason to believe that man's soul was in existence before he himself came into being, so we would be inclined to say that with his death, his soul, too, must perish. No man has ever returned after his death and given us any compelling testimony to his soul's immortality. He, therefore, who would not deceive himself must admit that no decisive proof of man's spiritual immortality has ever been furnished by either a Jewish or a Gentile thinker. On the contrary, since the burden of proof is upon him who would maintain a given belief, rather than on him who denies it, it might almost be said that those who deny the belief in immortality have positive proof of the soul's disintegration.

It is not my task here to enumerate the arguments on either side. I merely wish to state my own conclusions, arrived at after a careful consideration of all of these arguments.

Most frightening for every Jew is the fact that, when we read through the whole Pentateuch from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Deuteronomy, we fail to find in all the words of Moses a single indication pointing to man's spiritual immortality after his physical death, or the existence of any world beside this one. Even though Moses . . . on several occasions speaks about how the observance of the commandments would be duly rewarded, he contents himself with promising the people physical rewards and success in this life—children, honor, and wealth.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Not when he spoke, before the revelation of the Law, about God's promises to the patriarchs and saints, nor at the time that the Law was revealed through him, nor even after then, did Moses say a single word to the effect that God has promised: If you will walk in My statutes, then your soul will enjoy everlasing bliss after death. Moses speaks instead of seasonal rain, bread, natural increase, life secure in the land, the defeat of enemies, and the like. Even in the Prophets and in the Hagiographa there are only vague hints concerning immortality; and all such supposed hints might just as well be interpreted as having reference to physical life.

Nevertheless, when we contemplate our present existence, reason inclines us (if it does not altogether compel us) to believe that the soul continues on after our physical death. There is, first, some sense of this in the fact that Nature, doing nothing in vain, has implanted in the human mind a desire for eternal life that is not realized in the life of the body. Then there is the evidence from the increase of our mental powers at the very time when old age brings with it a weakening of the body; if the connection between body and mind were absolute rather than incidental, we should expect the opposite to be true: the mind becoming weaker in proportion to the body's enfeeblement.

But what I consider to be the decisive proof is derived from our basic assumption that man is *sui generis,* neither like the angels nor like the beasts, and that he has been created for the purpose of giving God pleasure by his wide range of intelligent actions. How, then, can we say that ultimately man has no advantage over the beasts, and that the same fate, the same death, will befall him as them? How can we say that the creature who, by dint of his intellect, builds cities and moves mountains, changes the course of rivers, knows the paths of the high heavens, and can recognize his God—that this creature should come in the end to perish entirely like a horse, or a dog, or a fly?

Moreover, if this were so, then man's consciousness would be a sorry drawback. Animals are not troubled by anything about life or death other than by those things which they actually experience at a given moment. Man's consciousness, on the other hand, increases his pain by anticipating troubles yet to come, and dwelling on those already present. This is far more painful than the actual trouble: as it has rightly been said, the trouble of death is the thought of it before it comes.

Rather should it be said that the Creator Who, having joined man's soul to his body, takes pleasure in, or abhors, man's deeds, and bestows His rewards or punishments accordingly—that this Creator has made it possible for a man at his death to have his soul separated from his body, so that the soul may remain to receive the pleasure or the pain of which, in his lifetime, the man was judged deserving, in accordance with his deeds.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ON THE HORIZON

ANNE FRANK ON BROADWAY

Metamorphosis into American Adolescent

ALGENE BALLIF

THOSE of us who have read and loved *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* might well be interested in the production currently enjoying success at the Cort Theater in an adaptation by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett called simply *The Diary of Anne Frank*. One knows beforehand that to translate such a work into drama is an impossible task for anyone but a Chekhov, and particularly for the caliber of playwrights who address themselves to the business of "adapting" these days. But at 8:40 P.M. there is a magic of expectation that puts one in a generous frame of mind, and creates the hope that the failure about to be witnessed will at least be an honorable attempt. And when the theater darkens, the hush falls, and the velvet curtain rises slowly on the dimly lit interior we recognize as the "Secret Annex," all is well, because the set, ingeniously compact, is faithful to our impression of the cramped and shabby quarters which the diary describes. Immediately familiar, nostalgic, and poignant, we believe in it.

THE play begins rather well. The war is over; Anne's father shuffles up the stairs and enters the disordered hiding place for the first time since he and his family were discovered in it by the *Grüne Polizei* and sent to concentration camps. All have since perished save himself, and he drifts about the old room like a forlorn apparition, picking up wisps of things as if they were memories he cannot remember well enough, can't really touch, yet which prick at his feelings like darning needles at tatters. It has something of the atmosphere of the last scene of *Our Town* about it, when the spirit of Emily returns to the scenes of her youth and is overwhelmed by a sense of never having held life close enough. Here, the living Mr. Frank comes back to a room full of ghosts, the elusive spirits of his beloved family, who carry brief whiffs of recent life to his nostrils, and leave him torn between the pain of remembering them too well, and the pain of realizing how utterly alone he is. He peers about, dazedly intent, as if half expecting them to materialize. Perhaps for a moment they do, for suddenly he sinks down in a paroxysm of pathetic little sobs. Not a word has been spoken, but these are the best moments of the play; the kind of experience that Mr. Frank survived has been simply and movingly suggested.

Abruptly the spell is broken. The Dutch friend who had helped hide the family, Miep, invades the scene, pregnant (life goes on), practical (you're not leaving, Mr. Frank, this is your *business*), and speaking in the pedestrian tones of a sensible young American housewife. She produces Anne's diary, gives it to Mr. Frank, and he begins to read it aloud—almost without batting an eyelash, without having properly established a mood for the reading of the diary, or the

---

THE current Broadway dramatization of *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* recalls the fact that COMMENTARY was the first to bring the *Diary* to English-speaking readers, publishing extensive excerpts from it in the issues of May and June 1952. ALGENE BALLIF was born in Utah in 1924 and educated at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. This is her first appearance in print.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

effect that reading it for the first time would have upon Anne's father.

Then the voice of a girl fades in and takes over the passages of narration which bridge the transitions from scene to scene throughout the play. It is a lovely voice—young and resonant and full of the energy of good will and the desire to be loved by her audience. But it is not long before the listener becomes aware of an inadequacy: it is the voice of a girl who has never really listened to the *inner* voice of Anne Frank, which is the true voice of the diary. It is a voice that, like the stock dove of Wordsworth's poem, seems to listen only to itself. It is without the nuance, the quick intelligence, even without the volatility by which we would recognize its prototype. It rises and falls in set cadence, like waves lapping a shore, and toward the end of the play it has taken on a kind of pseudo-caesural pause in the middle of almost every line—intended, I imagine, to convey Anne's having grown up a bit more, having suffered the pangs of falling in love, and having begun to think. The Anne of this play, however, has not actually undergone any of these experiences, at least in the way that the real Anne Frank did, so that these incoherent halts serve only to heighten the effect of superficiality and inarticulateness that renders the script so poor, does pitiful injustice to the diary, and proves too much even for those of the actors who try to make up for it.

For the bulk of the play, this is the Anne Frank who takes over; seldom do we glimpse the Anne Frank of the real diary. There is, for example, an incident in the first act which quite subverts the real Anne's healthy, sturdy nature. When the occupants of the Secret Annex are seized with panic because of sudden loud noises coming from the landing just beyond their secret door, Anne faints dead away. The Anne of the diary did not faint. There is an entry on October 20, 1942, which speaks of having "nearly fainted," and Anne experienced, throughout her sequestration, many moments of fear, terror, and shock much worse than this one—but she does not ever faint. It is rather important, I think, that seemingly small facts like this should not be violated for the sake of a dramatic situation which would be quite dramatic enough without such extremities of response. Not that Anne was self-sufficient and contained as regards the frightening realities of hiding for two years under the very nose of the Gestapo, but neither was she hysterical about them. That quality of response belongs rather to Mrs. Van Daan, as Anne's diary so thoroughly bears out.

The most seriously dishonest section of the play, however, and the one which I think is the crux of its failure, is that which attempts to dramatize Anne's romance with Peter Van Daan. I could not recognize a jot of truth in it. In this scene, Anne is revealed in her small bedroom at stage right wearing a white eyelet-embroidered petticoat and chemise. She is, according to local parlance, "getting all gussied up" to visit Peter, who is waiting restlessly in his small garret on the other side of the stage. As the dialogue proceeds, Anne sweeps her long hair up into a psyche-bun and impulsively tries on her sister's pink lace brassière, stroking the firmness of her round young breasts as she does so. Then she dons a soft pastel skirt and décolleté blouse of charming simplicity, petit-Louis pumps, and, for the finishing touch, a lengthy knitted stole of soft wool. Before emerging from her room she pauses on the threshhold and says to her sister, "Well, here I go to 'run the gamut'!" Then out she glides, stately as a debutante, through the room where the parents and Mr. Dussel sit, to Peter's door, aloof to the presence of everyone. Peter shows her in and there ensues a conversation between the young lovers that quivers with demure restraint and produces an abundance of the caesural pauses elsewhere described.

The conversation, let alone the manner in which it is carried on, has virtually nothing to do with Anne Frank—nor for that matter with Peter Van Daan. The Anne of this scene, for example, hesitatingly asks Peter if he has ever kissed a girl, to which he replies yes, to which she inquires if she was very pretty, and so on in the vein of one of the stock versions of the adolescent; and after a strained little ceremony of saying good night to each other, they suddenly turn back and fall into each other's arms in an ardent, innocent embrace. Then, when the door closes on Peter's room, and Anne stands outside it, presumably with rapidly beating heart, she does a curious and uncharacteristic thing: she lifts her dangling stole and tosses

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it cavalierly over one shoulder, as if to say, "Ah, now I am a woman of the world!" and as if, too, in secret jest of all that has taken place. It is true that the Anne of the diary once or twice speaks of Peter as her "conquest," but this is never for a moment meant in the sense of a coy spoof, or for the purposes of striking a pose, or as an innuendo suggesting any fundamental lack of earnestness and directness about their relationship. The real Anne Frank would never, at such a moment, have performed this flippant little antic. The audience, I must report, was greatly amused by it.

But if this were not enough, Anne then goes through the extraordinary business of languidly kissing each member of the household good night, hovering over them gently and lovingly as she does so, and imparting to her audience the age-old truth (undiscovered until our century) that a little love is a wonderful thing. With this she floats into her room, and the wholesome little love scene comes to its close. There is, however, just one last comment on the *"grande amour"* as Mrs. Van Daan takes the stage with a noise that is supposed to be the authentic Yiddish version of "Eh-heh!"

For anyone who has read and understood the diary of Anne Frank I need not point out the utter travesty this scene commits. Anne's relation to Peter was notable for its lack of pretension, its candor and ingenuousness, its freedom from all the ritualized and self-conscious behavior that seems to be the only sign by which we recognize a "normal" adolescent. Peter is a person whom Anne has found herself able to be and talk with more honestly and easily than with anyone else—even her father—and without the constraint that so oppresses her when she is in the presence of "grown-ups." In the play it is just the reverse. Anne and Peter cannot really speak to each other, and Anne's preliminary toilette strikes us as a symbol of this state of affairs, for it shows that she cannot even go to Peter as her natural self. As she performed her last rites of the good night kiss for everyone in the room, I could not help remembering the moment in the real Anne's diary when she irritably mentions not feeling like kissing people good night any more, and that it occurs about the same time that she begins to reveal her growing attachment to Peter.

There are numerous other touches of this sort which emphasize the central failure of the play to catch the spirit of the work from which it springs. The plot literally thickens with misrepresentations. Anne's conflicts with her mother are inanely arbitrary and often seem perverse. This is because the character of Mrs. Frank is not created, and what the Anne of the diary reacted to is never here disclosed. Anne's keen and well-articulated insights always told us what it was in other people and herself that caused the friction between them. In her deepest self she never really accepts the explanation that it is "just a stage" she is going through. And when, in the last act, Anne is made to say, "Daddy was right, it was just a phase I was going through," what was left of my sorely tried generosity turned to gall. There was nothing left to hope for, since the very pith and marrow of the diary had with this glib stroke, so wisely spoken, been swept away.

The Broadway Anne Frank had turned out to be not much more than the Jewish Corliss Archer (the adolescent girl in *Kiss and Tell*)—a more human and endearing Corliss than we have had for some time perhaps, but still another image of that fixed American idea of the adolescent, the central imperative of which is that this species of creature is not to be taken seriously. (Unless, of course, he becomes a delinquent.)

If the diary of Anne Frank is remarkable for any one thing, it is for the way in which she is able to command our deepest seriousness about everything she is going through—the way she makes us forget she is an adolescent and makes us wish that this way of experiencing life were not so soon lost by some of us, and much sooner found by most of us. Ironically for her, the Anne Frank on Broadway cannot command our seriousness, for all Anne's true seriousness—her honesty, intelligence, and inner strength—has been left out of the script.

It is impossible here to consider why and how this myth of adolescence has taken hold in America, and why Anne Frank's dramatizers seem to have lost touch with her, and have dealt with her story in so false and shallow a fashion. But if we in America cannot present her with the respect and integrity and seriousness she deserves, then I think we should not try to present her at

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all. Not all adolescents, even in America, are the absurd young animals we know from stage and screen. Not all of them are able to spare us the agony of taking them seriously, or themselves the agony of trying to grow up. Not all of them are the desperate young clowns who never do grow up, but only quiet down. Anne Frank was not an "American" adolescent, as Mr. Hackett and Miss Goodrich would have us believe. She was an unaffected young girl, exceedingly alive, deep, and honest—experiencing more, and in a better way perhaps, than many of us do in the course of a whole lifetime.

Not one of the characters in *The Diary of Anne Frank* is brought to life—not even Anne's father, who is her chiefest source of wisdom, dignity, and strength in the book. It is not the actors' fault; they are all at least competent. They are simply uninspired by the script. Margot barely utters a word, and Dussel is just a laugh man. All are primarily foils for the antics of Anne rather than the people she lived and shared and struggled with for two clandestine years. The wonderful patches of their conversation which she wrote down in her diary are never heard. The daily, active dedication to learning of the Frank family, the political discussions that Anne complained about, the wireless that was always tuned to the BBC, and the confirmed Anglophiles who listened to it (Anne's diary seldom mentions the Americans; it is the English who are really fighting the war, and Churchill is their great man)—all these never find their way into the play. They would have been forgivable omissions if the spirit of Anne herself had survived them. That it did not can only turn us back to her real diary for the kind of memorial she requires.

ZEALOTS OF YEARNING

DAVID ROKEAH

Praises to those who can wait.
For theirs is the future.
They who stand facing the mountain and do not draw back
Will mount to its summit.

For the river that winds its way to the sea has a hope
Of releasing its longings amid the breakers of ocean.
Thus does the tree hope that sends a branch up into the sky
For the palm of the sun to touch it when the given day comes.

Therefore we love the morning star as the assurance of dawn.
The nightingale's love song as the longings of motherhood.
The plashing of springs as the pulsing of realized dream.
Streams carving the beds of rivers to come
Without growing weary.
All who make their covenant of longing and hope within existence,
For they are the zealots of the yearning.

Therefore envigor the burden of the future
Just as the waves envigor the rocks of the shore.
And like to the white-hot iron the smith-shapes to his will,
Fashion and shape the dreams of trust.
Desolation will not vanish out of the Negev
Ere it vanishes out of the hearts.

David Rokeah is a poet of Israel whose writings (reviews as well as verse) have appeared in that country's leading periodicals. The poem we print is from a volume (one of three) already published; it was translated from the Hebrew by I. M. Lask. Mr. Rokeah is, also, a practicing electrical engineer.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE STUDY OF MAN

MORE LIGHT FROM JUDEAN CAVES

Biblical Archeology's Great Decade

H. L. GINSBERG

BOTH Israel and Jordan have displayed a commendable zeal in seeking, preserving, and publishing the archeological remains within their respective borders. The most sensational finds of recent years, however, have been made in the northern half of the Wilderness of Judah; actually, the decade that began in the spring of 1947 may come to be known in the history of archeological discovery in the Holy Land as the "Decade of the Wilderness of Judah." The Wilderness itself is a narrow strip of very steep, broken, and arid land running between the Dead Sea and the watershed of the hill country of Judah.

In the northern half of the Wilderness, which lies inside the Kingdom of Jordan, manuscripts dating from antiquity came to light at or near Khirbet Qumran, in 1947-52, and Wadi Murabba'at, in 1951-52. At Khirbet Mird, in 1952-53, old manuscripts were recovered in the ruins of an ancient monastery but, being medieval, they do not concern us here. Those at the other two sites were found in caves, and I shall here anticipate my conclusions to the extent of noting that the Khirbet Qumran manuscripts were abandoned in the year 68 C.E., during the First Jewish Revolt (against Rome), and the Wadi Murabba'at ones—at least the most important of them—more than sixty-five years later, in 134-5 C.E., during the Second Jewish Revolt. At Khirbet Qumran, only one manuscript cave was known from 1947 through 1951, but five more were discovered in 1952. At Wadi Murabba'at, there are two "literate" grottoes.

Wadi Murabba'at

WADI MURABBA'AT is a wild ravine extremely difficult of access. Both its two "literate" and its two "illiterate" grottoes contained abundant anepigraphic relics (remains without writing) of human occupation over a period of more than four thousand years—from the 4th millennium B.C.E. until well into the Arab period. The extreme dryness of the climate had preserved not only pottery but wooden utensils and cloth and, along with these, such perishable writing materials as papyrus and crude leather.

The period of most intensive human occupation had evidently been the Roman, which was represented by the most artifacts. These include coins of the 1st and 2nd centuries C.E. and writings in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin; some of these mention persons, and some actual dates, of the 2nd century C.E. One very notable event of that century was the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome, which lasted from 132 to 135. Its leader's given name, Simeon, was formerly known only from coins he had minted, while his surname was not really known at all. It is indeed given as

---

THE finding of the ancient Hebrew scrolls near the Dead Sea is revealing itself as one of the greatest events in Biblical archeology since we have had such a field of study. Here H. L. GINSBERG, who already gave us a first report on the significance of the finds in "The Cave Scrolls and the Jewish Sects" in our July 1953 number, brings us up to date on the results of scholarly work on the manuscripts since then. Dr. Ginsberg is Sabato Morais Professor of Biblical History and Literature at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Born in Montreal, he studied at Jews' College in London, at the University of London, and at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ben Kozeba or Bar Kozeba (Son of the Disappointer), in rabbinic literature, and as Kocheba (the Star) or Bar Kocheba (Son of the Star) in the early Christian sources. But scholars have always realized that these were mere nicknames—the Christian writings preserving an earlier name from the time when the Jews had pinned great hopes on Simeon, and the rabbinic ones reflecting their disappointment. Only now do we know that his actual, official surname was Ben Kosbah. For at Wadi Murabba'at were found preserved from the time of the Second Revolt the following items: nine coins dating from that period; some Aramaic deeds dated in "the Year Three of Israel's Freedom" (134 C.E.); several fragmentary Hebrew documents dated by "the deliverance of Israel through Simeon ben Kosbah, Prince of Israel"; two letters addressed by "Simeon ben Kosbah, Prince of Israel" to one "Jeshua ben Galgola and the men of the fort"; and another letter from a different quarter addressed to the same "Jeshua ben Galgola, commander of the camp." It would seem that this Jeshua commanded a military guard which Simeon kept stationed in this desert fastness, even as the aforementioned Latin text shows that the Romans kept one stationed there subsequently—probably to keep watch over one of the roads leading to En-gedi.

The Wadi Murabba'at grottoes have further yielded some fragments of the Bible: of Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, and Isaiah. (Latest reports tell of the recovery of a defective copy of the Minor Prophets.) That they are so fragmentary is not an accident. One of the pieces of scroll has a tear which runs across three columns. The war against Ben Kosbah, as we ought now to call him, was one of the bitterest the Romans ever had to fight, and these particular grottoes in the midst of a desolate waste must have cost them heavy casualties. The pagan soldiers therefore tore the Torah scrolls and other sacred writings to shreds. Probably because of their inconspicuousness, a couple of phylacteries survived intact.

The Biblical texts found at Wadi Murabba'at (at least apart from the aforementioned unpublished scroll of the Minor Prophets) agree exactly, even to the spelling, with the Masoretic Text (our present Hebrew text), while the phylacteries contain exactly the Pentateuch sections prescribed by the Rabbis. No apocryphal texts were found and, of course, no heretical writings.

Khirbet Qumran

READERS of COMMENTARY (July 1953, p. 77-81) already know a good deal about these, the original, "cave scrolls." But abundant new data have become available in the past two years, and a certain amount of recapitulation is desirable and even unavoidable.

Whereas in our last article we were able to speak of only some forty distinct manuscripts identified with certainty and the prospect of their number being raised to seventy, we can now speak of hundreds of books dating partly from the 1st (some probably from the 2nd) century B.C.E., and partly from the 1st century C.E. The evidence for this dating—which, it is credibly rumored, has just been sensationally augmented in a manner which may soon be divulged—is at present as follows:

1. The script of the dated Wadi Murabba'at manuscripts of the year 134 C.E., which I have just mentioned, furnishes one most important piece of evidence. Next to it, even the latest scripts of Khirbet Qumran look archaic.

2. The great bulk of the inscribed material is crude leather, though there is one specimen of parchment (finely prepared skin), and also a little papyrus and three sheets of copper. There is further an ostracon (inscribed potsherd), which was not found in one of the caves but in a nearby spot of which more will be said below. The important thing to remember is the negative feature that in all this vast quantity of material there is not a single piece of paper.

3. The soft materials—leather and papyrus—all constitute scrolls. Thus far there is no evidence for there having been any codices (bundles of leaves, like our modern books). And there is not, in all this mass, a single trace of vowel signs.

To be sure, some papyrus was still used in the Middle Ages, and some scrolls are used even today; e.g., our *Sifrei Torah, megillot, tefillin, mezuzot,* and—diplomas. But a library of hundreds of books comprising only scrolls, and none of paper but only of crude leather or papyrus (except for one item of parchment), is not seriously conceivable after the 3rd century C.E., if that late. And the following further observations go to show that the manuscripts were in fact stowed away in the caves as early as the 1st century C.E.

4. The manuscripts of Cave One were wrapped in linen. The age of the linen has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been determined by a carbon-14 test as 33 C.E., with a margin of possible error of two centuries upward as well as downward.

5. The manuscripts of Cave One were stored in jars of a type found nowhere else except in neighboring caves (where they were used for more prosaic purposes than the storage of books) and in Level II of the nearby site of settlement known as Khirbet Qumran. Obviously, therefore, the manuscripts in question were placed in the jars and cached in the cave not later than the time when the said level of occupation of the nearby settlement was destroyed. And that date can be fixed very exactly. The latest of the many coins found in Level II is of the Year Two of the First Jewish Revolt, i.e. the year 67-68 C.E.; and we know from Josephus that Vespasian, the Roman general who was soon to be acclaimed emperor, occupied Jericho in June of the year 68. Khirbet Qumran is only eight miles south of Jericho and—unlike Wadi Murabba'at—can be reached with comparative ease; moreover, Josephus actually tells of Vespasian reaching the Dead Sea. Clearly, therefore, this was the occasion when the Romans captured and destroyed Level II of Khirbet Qumran; and it must have been in the preceding weeks or months, and in anticipation of Vespasian's coming, that the manuscripts were hidden away.

But the unusual jars are not the only objects recovered from Level II of Khirbet Qumran that bear directly upon the manuscripts in the caves of the vicinity. The settlement consisted of a single large public building of two stories. The debris of the upper story was found to include what may have been a washstand and also three tables and two inkwells, and there were benches along its walls. This was evidently the *scriptorium,* the room in which scribes sat and copied books for the community's use.

The building also had facilities for cooking and for communal meals and/or deliberations. To the east of it was a large cemetery of about eleven hundred graves, the building and the cemetery occupying between them a sort of plateau in the cliffside. A number of caves in the vicinity contained pottery but no manuscripts and evidently served as dwellings, or as storerooms for people who dwelt in tents close by. Now, it is at least a remarkable coincidence that a notable feature of Essene practice, as described in our sources, was the communal repast. The famous Roman naturalist Pliny—who accompanied Vespasian on his Judean campaign—describes the location of a colony of Essenes by the Dead Sea in terms which fit Khirbet Qumran remarkably well. The owners of the Khirbet Qumran scrolls are shown by the content of some of the scrolls to have been certainly a community of sectarians; and probably those sectarians were Essenes.

It would be too good to be true if the entire library of this community had remained intact until the recent discoveries. Khirbet Qumran is not inaccessible like Wadi Murabba'at; and although Cave One is off the beaten track, in the side of a cliff, most of its original contents were already gone when chance led a Bedouin into it in the spring of 1947. There has long been known a letter of circa 800 C.E. which mentions a discovery of Hebrew manuscripts in a cave in the vicinity of Jericho, and Karaite and Moslem writers after 900 also know of sectarian writings which were discovered in a cave. From the contents which these writers attribute to those ancient screeds it is almost certain that they belonged to the same sect as the Khirbet Qumran ones, and the cave in question may even be precisely our Cave One. But, in any case, the remains which have been salvaged from these grottoes in the last few years are epoch-making.

Here we have writings embodying the principles, regulations, liturgy, and interpretations of Scripture of a vanished Jewish sect. Here we have parts of the lost Hebrew and Aramaic originals of those remarkable works known as the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha. We have even the Aramaic original of a pseudepigraphon (the Book of Lamech) whose existence was previously known only from an old book list, but of which no copy was extant in any language. And here we have the remains of an entire library of Hebrew Bible manuscripts which are centuries older than any previously known.

Of the sect's own writings and doctrines, as also of its possession of some of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and their influence upon its writings and doctrines, I have spoken in my previous article. I would here merely add that we now know that the Khirbet Qumran library possessed, along with extra-canonical scriptures otherwise unknown, more than one copy each of the Book of Jubilees and First Enoch in the original Hebrew, as well as both a Hebrew and an Aramaic text of the Book of Tobit.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The State & Uses of the Bible in Greco-Roman Times

As is well known, the Rabbis of the Roman Age made little effort to imitate the language of the Bible in the Mishnah, Tosephta, Baraitot, and Midrashim, but employed what is called Mishnaic or Talmudic Hebrew; by means of which they achieved precision, conciseness, and picturesqueness. Only in the set prayers which they prescribed—in the sections preceding and following the Shema, and especially in the Amidah—was there an obvious attempt to "talk Biblically." And even then there was no attempt to show off how many more or less apposite Biblical phrases they could think of and combine but, on the contrary, a beautiful simplicity and dignity—at least in those rabbinic prayers which ended by being adopted permanently. The sectarian Hebrew of the Khirbet Qumran manuscripts is much more "Biblical." Yet I do not think it is bias that makes me pronounce it notably inferior to the Hebrew of the Rabbis. Even the non-liturgical texts of these people read like mosaics of Biblical phrases, with a good deal of prolixity for the sake of getting in more Biblical flourishes; while their liturgies carry this tendency to monstrous extremes, with the result that the thread of thought is sometimes lost in the mass of verbiage. At the same time, the post-Biblical words with which their compositions are interspersed show that the living Hebrew of the time was actually very much like that which the Rabbis employed as a matter of course.

In other respects, however, the sectarians' use of the Bible was very similar to that of the Rabbis. Thus in two of their books, known as the "Damascus Covenant" and the "Manual of Discipline," they bolster their arguments with quotations from the Bible which they interpret midrashically; and—this was indeed a surprise—Cave One yielded a practically complete midrash on the Book of Habakkuk and fragments of midrashim on Micah and Zephaniah, while Cave Four yielded parts of one or more on Isaiah. Three different caves seem to have yielded parts of one or more "commentaries" on Psalms. Some scholars have insisted that these are not midrashim but commentaries in our sense of the word. Well, the one, or the ones, on Isaiah have not been published; but the others, at any rate, are completely lacking in those things which are the very stuff of Bible commentaries in our sense of the term, and which are by no means entirely neglected even in our rabbinic midrashim: namely, grammatical, etymological, stylistic, and antiquarian notes; and any number of exegetical puzzles are not even tackled. Instead, only those verses are selected for exposition which lend themselves to a completely arbitrary interpretation as allusions to current history. Take the Book of Habakkuk, for example. It is remarkable enough according to its plain sense. A prophet here actually reproaches his God for remaining passive while the ungodly Chaldeans are having the upper hand over other, innocent nations (the prophet does not single out the wrongs done to his own Jewish people!) and then waits for and receives a reply to his reproach. ("Reproach" is the word he himself uses.) But according to the sectarian interpreter, all the prophet is concerned about is the wrong which the Teacher of Righteousness, the founder or hero of the sect, is destined to suffer half a millennium later at the hands of Hasmonean priest-princes; his reproach is directed not to God but to some human party who will be in a position to protest against the maltreatment of the Teacher of Righteousness; and the Chaldeans are none other than the Romans, whose suzerainty over Judea since 63 B.C. is represented as a punishment for the persecution of the Teacher of Righteousness and his companions.

Very similar applications of ancient oracles to their own times can be cited from the Rabbis, but by them they are meant to be understood more as *jeux d'esprit* than as insights into the actual intentions of the ancient texts. Thus, although it is true that in the Hebrew text of the oracle which announced to our mother Rebekah that "Two nations are in thy womb" the word for "nations" is spelled in such a way that it could also be read as "magnates," no Jew would be considered a heretic for doubting whether this was really meant to allude to the wealthy compiler of the Mishnah (who was of course descended from Jacob) and to the Roman emperor (supposedly descended from Esau) whose friendship the former is said to have enjoyed. On the other hand, it is well known that such "actualizations" of ancient prophecy are basic to Christianity. It is natural to surmise that this agreement between the Khirbet Qumran group and the early Christians in making every possible ancient text refer to their own times is due to the fact that both the Khirbet Qumran sect and the early Christians were persecuted and believed that they were

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

living at "the end of the days"; the former expecting the early rise of "a Messiah from Aaron and Israel," and the latter awaiting an imminent Second Advent. For it is a fact that in an even earlier age, when Judaism was subjected to such a persecution that its early disappearance seemed inevitable barring a miracle, it produced just such "eschatological midrashim," and these were embodied in the Bible itself.

The crisis to which I refer was the outlawing of Judaism by Antiochus Epiphanes in the years 167-4 B.C.E., and the midrashim which discovered that both this crisis and the dire end of Antiochus and the dawn of a new age had all been foretold in the ancient Scriptures are embodied in the Book of Daniel. Here (Daniel 9) we are told in so many words that the seventy years of subjection to Babylon foretold by Jeremiah were not seventy years but seventy hebdomads (weeks of years), or four hundred ninety years in all, and that they would witness many vicissitudes ending with the outlawing of the Jewish religion for half a hebdomad (three and a half years) and would be followed by the dawn of a new age. And I have shown elsewhere how a much more elaborate midrash which, among other things, turned the Assyria of Isaiah's oracles into the Syria of the 2nd century B.C.E. and the haughty king of Assyria whom Isaiah denounces into Antiochus Epiphanes, has been incorporated in Daniel 11. It is safe to say that next to Halachic midrash (see COMMENTARY, September 1950, p. 283), Eschatological midrash, as exemplified by the sectarian midrashim on Habakkuk and Micah and by the even earlier midrash of Daniel 11, on Isaiah, is the oldest type of midrash there is.

THESE sectarians, then, were steeped in the Bible, they imitated its phraseology and meditated upon its meaning. In what form did they read it? I have already mentioned that no codices (books of leaves, like ours) were found at Khirbet Qumran, but only scrolls. It follows that these people could not possibly have possessed complete one-volume Bibles. We all know how bulky and heavy even the Pentateuch (the Torah) alone is in scroll form. But they probably did possess copies of all of the separate books in the Hebrew canon, with the possible exception of Esther. To date, fragments have been found of every book except Esther. It may well be that these sectarians did not recognize either the Book of Esther—in all probability a product of the Hasmonean Age—or the Festival of Purim, whose observance that Book enjoins. It is also far from certain that they observed Chanukah, a festival instituted by the Hasmoneans, whom they detested.

Interestingly enough, a few of the Bible scrolls are in the Old Hebrew script, which today must be familiar even to the layman from the reproductions of ancient Jewish coins on Israeli postage stamps. Even the legends on the coins of the Second Revolt minted by Simeon ben Kosbah are in the Old Hebrew script. The Mishnah does not permit the use of scrolls in this script for reading from in the synagogue, but this prohibition itself reflects the existence of such scrolls among Jews of the Mishnaic period. As is well known, the Samaritans to this day use this script alone. Because of its venerable age, it was actually often regarded as more sacred than our square Hebrew letters, so that some of the sectarian documents which are otherwise executed in the square script use the Old Hebrew script for writing the name of God. Similarly, in his Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, Aquila (a contemporary of Simeon ben Kosbah) neither translated nor even transcribed the Tetragrammaton but copied it out—in the Old Hebrew script.

The sectarians' most popular book of the Bible outside the Pentateuch was the Book of Isaiah. Khirbet Qumran has yielded one complete scroll of it, one defective one, a fragment of a third and, as we have already mentioned, parts of at least one midrash on it. In this the sectarians were by no means unique. The only books of the Bible outside the Pentateuch of which a remnant was found at Wadi Murabba'at were Isaiah and—according to latest reports—the Minor Prophets. That Daniel 11 embodies a whole midrash on Isaiah was mentioned above. Readers of the New Testament are familiar with two further instances: there is the story (Luke 4:16-22) of how Jesus went into the synagogue of Capernaum on a Sabbath, stood up to read, and was handed a scroll of Isaiah, which he opened and in which he read and interpreted a passage; and there is the other (Acts 8:26 ff.) about how the apostle Philip came upon an Ethiopian eunuch reading the prophet Isaiah and entered into a discussion with him. The reason for this popularity is not far to seek. Of the three major prophets, the Rabbis observe that Jeremiah is all calamity, Ezekiel part calamity and part

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

consolation, and Isaiah (especially what the moderns call Second Isaiah) all consolation (Baba Batra 14b)—and, we may add, consolation in language of unforgettable beauty.

But readers will doubtless be most interested to know what light these texts shed upon higher, or literary, criticism and upon lower, or textual, criticism. Upon higher criticism, they shed no light at all. The complete Isaiah scroll, which is nearly the oldest manuscript of the lot, does not date from much before 100 B.C.E., and nobody who deserves to be taken seriously imagines that anything was added to the Book of Isaiah after that date. But for lower criticism these texts are very important. For some of them agree with our Masoretic Text in a high degree (so the first of the incomplete Isaiah scrolls) while others (notably the complete Isaiah scroll) diverge notably in spelling and grammar, and not infrequently in wording. By the way, the divergences in spelling and grammar are nearly always in the direction of later usage—just as in the Samaritan Pentateuch and in unscholarly manuscripts of the classics.

It is of course the wording of the cave Bible scrolls that interests us in particular, and it is very interesting to find that it frequently agrees with the Septuagint, the most famous of the Greek versions, and at other points disagrees with both the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint. In one case where the Septuagint rendering reflects a different Hebrew reading from ours, that divergent Hebrew reading turns up in a Khirbet Qumram scroll and proves to be definitely superior to that of the received, or masoretic, text. In Deuteronomy 29:1, Moses summons the Israelites for a farewell address which runs to the end of Chapter 30. This is followed by some brief instructions and dispositions. In the received text, the transition from the "ethical will" to the instructions and dispositions reads as follows (Deuteronomy 31:1-2): "Now, when Moses *had gone and spoken* [*wylk msh wydbr*] these words to all of Israel, he said to them. . . ." Obviously more correct, however, is the reading of a Khirbet Qumran scroll, which is also that which the Septuagint translator had before him: "Now, when Moses *had finished speaking* [*wykl msh ldbr*] these words to all of Israel, he said to them. . . ." For since Moses had summoned the Israelites to him, he had not gone to them.

The Masoretic Text & Its Rivals in Orthodox Judaism

But in most cases where the Khirbet Qumran Bible texts diverge from ours, the readings are inferior to ours. What I wish to stress here is merely the fact that they contain at certain points considerable divergences both from our text and among themselves. This relative fluidity of text is just what we find in ancient manuscripts of the classics, and is presupposed by the rabbinic legislation and tradition. For the rule itself that a scroll not conforming to the standard text must not be read from in the synagogue presupposes that divergent texts are in circulation for private study; and the remarkable variants reported from Rabbi Meir's copies (middle of the 2nd century C.E.) show that when he copied for the private study of himself or his customers he didn't bother to adhere to the standard text of the Rabbis. (On all this and more, Saul Lieberman's *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine,* Chapter One, may profitably be consulted.) It is therefore by no means unlikely that, if the Biblical remains recovered from Wadi Murabba'at were not so scanty, they would be found not to accord with the Masoretic Text so perfectly as we have noted.

There is a famous tradition in the rabbinic sources (Sifre II 356 and parallels), about how three scrolls in the Temple forecourt were compared and the reading of the majority adopted as standard wherever two scrolls agreed against one. This tradition shows that the Jewish authorities, like the Greek philologians, realized that all readings were not equally good, and set out to recover the original text by adopting the readings of a majority of superior manuscripts. The result is our Masoretic Text, which is superior to all its rivals on the whole, but certainly can be corrected by the readings of one or another of them in a number of passages. Eventually this Standard Text superseded all others even for private study, but there still survive traces of the time when it had not yet won out even in the most official religious circles. The instances of non-masoretic Bible readings that occur in the Babylonian Talmud are listed in Rabbi Akiba Eger's *Gilyon hash-Shas* on Shabbat 55b; but the most notable one occurs in the Passover Haggadah. One of the passages in the Torah upon which the rabbinic requirement that the Haggadah be recited is based, comprises two verses which in our Standard (Masoretic) Text read as follows (Deut. 6:20-21): "When your

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

son asks you in time to come saying, What mean the testimonies, the statutes, and the ordinances which the Lord our God has commanded you? you shall say to your son, We were bondmen unto Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord took us out of Egypt with a mighty hand." The Septuagint, however, reads not "which the Lord our God has commanded *you*" but "which the Lord our God has commanded *us*," and not "out of *Egypt*" but "out of *there*," and not simply "with a mighty hand" but "with a mighty hand *and an outstretched arm*." Incredible as it may sound, our Haggadah agrees in every one of these respects with the Septuagint. Modern Occidental Haggadahs, to be sure, have corrected the son's question into "commanded *you*" so as to make it agree with the Masoretic Text, but early and Oriental Haggadahs still have the Septuagint reading ("commanded *us*") even here, and all Haggadahs have retained the Septuagint wording of the father's reply. In these two verses, therefore, the Rabbis obviously had before them the same Hebrew text as was used by the Septuagint translator.

In the daily liturgy, on the other hand, they have followed, at least at one point, a reading which disagrees with those both of the Masoretic Text and of the Septuagint, but agrees with that of the (complete) Isaiah cave scroll. The Amidah with which we are all familiar includes the sentence "And may our eyes behold how Thou returnest unto Zion in mercy." It is true that the old Palestinian Amidah lacked this sentence. But the Rabbis who introduced it—whether Palestinian or Babylonian—must have been inspired by a non-Masoretic text of that grand book of consolation, Isaiah. (As was noted above, the Rabbis did try to "talk Biblically" in the prayers which they composed, and Isaiah was everybody's favorite comforter.) To be sure, the main clause, "And may our eyes behold," was inspired by the Masoretic Text of Isaiah 33:17a, "Thine eyes shall behold a king in his beauty," and not by the divergent reading which is common to the Septuagint and the Cave Scroll. But as for the rest of the sentence in the Amidah, that can only derive from the Cave Scroll text of Isaiah 52:8b. For the Masoretic Text has here merely "Yea, eye to eye they shall see how the Lord returns unto Zion," without the addition of "in mercy." The Septuagint, on the other hand, has the "mercy" without the "returning," since it substitutes "takes pity on" for "returns unto." Only in the Cave Scroll do we find precisely what is presupposed by the wording of the Amidah: "Yea, eye to eye they shall see how the Lord *returns* unto Zion *in mercy*." To which we may add: Amen.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS FROM READERS

Ideology and "The People"

To the Editor of Commentary:

It seems to me that Mr. Oscar Handlin's article "Does the People's Rule Doom Democracy?" (July 1955) does not deal fairly with Mr. Walter Lippmann's valuable book *The Public Philosophy;* and that Mr. Handlin is endeavoring to draw us back into a heated atmosphere of slogan and ideology, while Mr. Lippmann has touched courageously and tellingly on some of the great problems of this age.

I wish, for one thing, that Mr. Handlin, before sitting in judgment upon Mr. Lippmann's interpretation of history, had taken the trouble to go next door at Harvard to the office of Mr. Crane Brinton, who might have told him a good deal about natural law and its influence upon modern political thought. For Mr. Lippmann is writing about the true and principal chain of natural-law thought, which passes from Cicero to the Schoolmen, and thence to Richard Hooker, and down to Burke: this is a world away from the *a priori* and misty "natural rights" of the French revolutionaries. The best recent examination of this subject is contained in Professor Leo Strauss's *Natural Right and History*. If, indeed, "the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen gave that idea its widest currency in the 19th century," as Mr. Handlin writes, it also distorted the concept of natural law and left it defenseless against the Utilitarians; only today is the educated public beginning to recover a sense of the true reason and value in natural-law theory. The journalist turns out to be a better historian of ideas than the Harvard professor.

And Mr. Handlin's whole argument is suffused with a sentimental adulation of "the people," what Lord Percy of Newcastle calls "the heresy of democracy." If a writer does not pay unceasing tribute to this abstraction The People, let him be anathema. When Mr. Lippmann simply repeats the old definition of the primary functions of government—defense of the realm and administration of justice—Mr. Handlin taxes him with deviation from the democratic dogma, informing us that the government ought to be concerned with "the interests of the people"—as if security and regular justice had nothing to do with popular interests.

"The miracle of democratic leadership is the continuing refutation of Lippmann's fears," Mr. Handlin assures us, in conclusion. Thus we refute a writer by ignoring most of his arguments. Mr. Lippmann is pointing out that the survival of democracy anywhere—and it has been beaten down in most of the world already—is nothing short of miraculous. Great states are imprudent if they found their policy upon the expectation of perpetual miracles. That Mr. Handlin ends his list of successful democratic politicians with the name of Harry Truman is in itself some confirmation of the gravity of the fears which Mr. Lippmann expresses. What Mr. Lippmann tells us, principally, is that modern democracy was made possible by certain ethical principles which now have lost their power over a very great part of mankind. Energetically passing over this whole line of thought Mr. Handlin endeavors to silence any criticism of the abstract People by a clamor very like the cry of Orwell's sheep: "Four legs good, two legs bad."

Mr. Handlin is an ideologist; Mr. Lippmann is not. Because Mr. Lippmann doubts the sufficiency of shabby slogans to shelter us from the consequences of moral decay Mr. Handlin would have us turn upon him with a reproving "O ye of little faith!" We need only "remain close to the people," we are informed. Now Hitler was very close indeed to the people, and so was Mussolini. The prudence of remaining close to the people depends upon the moral health of the masses at any given time, and upon the retention of barriers against popular infatuation. The People do not exist as an omniscient and infallible corpus; there are only good and bad men, wise and ignorant. When just leadership and the tradition of civility are lacking, the voice of The People becomes the shriek of diabolic possession. There are various grounds for rational disagreement with Mr. Lippmann; yet kicking the doctor down the stairs is not often the best way to deal with a gnawing malady.

Russell Kirk

Mecosta, Michigan

Mr. Handlin *writes:*

Mr. Kirk does not call into question the central points of the argument of my article;

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and I find it unnecessary to add to what I have already said in criticism of Lippmann.

But Mr. Kirk does have his own axe to grind and his protest is curiously revealing on that account. He is thus unhappy at my assertion that "the Declaration of the Rights of Man" gave the ideas of natural law and natural rights their widest currency in the 19th century. He does not however deny the accuracy of the statement. Instead, he lets us know that a concept "a world away" passed from Cicero to Burke, that is, down to the end of the 18th century. The baffling irrelevance of this statement becomes downright comic when we read later in his letter that "modern democracy" (a product of the 19th century) "was made possible by certain ethical principles." Does he mean, by those principles held by the 19th-century democrats or by those which seemed to come to an end with Burke in the 18th century?

As an old-time ideologist who believes in the essential goodness of human nature, I cannot be content to abandon Mr. Kirk in darkness. At the root of his confusion is a habit of thought that supplants the written word with some inner source of knowledge of his own. Mr. Kirk knows what "the true and principal" chain of thought was; and he knows that that was in Lippmann's mind. Mr. Lippmann wrote that the duties of government included defense of the *state's* "order, security, and solvency"; Mr. Kirk knows that by that he meant the "administration of justice." I cannot find the phrase "the interests of the people" in my paragraph on the ends of government; yet Mr. Kirk puts it in quotation marks because he knows better what I had in mind. Nowhere did I say, "We need only 'remain close to the people' "; but Mr. Kirk's special lines of communication absolve him of the necessity for consulting my text.

Perhaps an ideologist is one who has respect for the integrity of ideas.

OSCAR HANDLIN

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Secularism's Victory Claimed

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article on "America's New Religiousness" (September 1955) Will Herberg argues that "religion is taken very seriously in present-day America in a way that would have amazed and chagrined those who were so very sure not very long ago that the ancient superstition was bound to disappear very shortly in the face of the steady advance of science and reason." This is an overstatement of the position of even the most optimistic "village atheist," who well knew how slowly "science and reason" reached the mind of man. Yet Mr. Herberg himself demonstrates in this article that the predictions of the agnostic and the atheist have been pretty well borne out.

"Religion" persists, and is enrolling large numbers of new converts in the degree to which it becomes meaningless. Mr. Herberg's sad lament about the lack of content in the American religions, and his fully substantiated charge that secularism and nationalism pervade the three religions, tend to prove my assertion. Should temple, church, or synagogue attempt to insist on a religion in which "the values of life, and life itself, are submitted to Almighty God to judge, to shatter and to reconstruct" their pews would be empty and their congregations fade away.

Jewish Orthodoxy, Protestant fundamentalism, and medieval Catholicism were religions of this sort. They changed, they had to change, because the realities of the industrial revolution and the discoveries in the field of science rendered their teachings irrelevant. They had to change in the direction that Mr. Herberg bemoans. It was against religion of this type, religion that had the power to excommunicate the scientific investigator, to burn his books, to frustrate his work, to blacklist his family, and even, on occasion, to burn him at the stake, that the adherents of science and reason rebelled. I do not think that Mr. Herberg will deny that, in compelling religion to reduce itself to the function of a social service club, they have won their victory.

I do not think that even Mr. Herberg wishes to return to the omnipotent church, to the priest uttering anathema, to the dungeon and the stake, which are the unavoidable appurtenances of a religion that teaches "the sense of the nothingness of man before a holy God."

DAVID P. BERENBERG

Brooklyn, New York

Social Mobility

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Luethy's self-styled European view of social mobility ("Social Mobility Again—and Elites," September) seemed as well expressed as it was speciously reasoned. Besides, his intentions were anything but clear. It would be foolish to deny that he raises an important point: how can different societies be validly compared with reference to the same general phenomenon? Perhaps he is right about the relative shortcomings of the particular statistical manipulations in the Lipset-Rogoff study, but surely this does not mean that no statistical

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

comparisons can be valid, nor does it acknowledge the service that Lipset and Rogoff have clearly done in framing their questions in the first place. They are better able to defend themselves than I can do it for them. But what saddens me about Mr. Luethy is the relative waste of his brilliance, for, with some penchant for the number thirty-six, he seems to believe that there are as many social mobilities as there are people. From his comments, as far as he commits himself, he doubts the possibility of general concepts. His doubt is merely based on the recognition, for instance, that there is not just one but potentially as many elites as there are possible social situations. Yet he himself uses the same word in several contexts. Surely his several elites have something in common? Why is it not important to discover their common features? This is not to deny their differences. Difference and similarity are palpably complementary terms. Sometimes, however, there may only be time to state one's findings about one of these. Besides, why does Mr. Luethy talk about American sociology? By his logic it should not exist.

This cannot be a European view, for its misplaced logic has been dealt with there by the possible mentors of Mr. Luethy himself, such as Max Weber, Pareto, Durkheim, and others, who both argued for and demonstrated the possibility of a general analysis of social phenomena that goes beyond the tradition of history. And why does it follow that because a theme is inappropriate for present statistical treatment it thereby becomes a theme for social philosophy?

As a European trained in the States and living in Canada, I find this European view of American sociology itself a good example of the kind of delirium of classification that Mr. Luethy opposes, and an accusation that in many quarters is very nearly pointless.

KASPER D. NAEGELE
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

[In the near future we shall publish an exchange of letters between Messrs. Lipset and Luethy on the subject of the latter's article.—ED.]

Hebrew's True Pronunciation

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As an avid reader of Dr. Cecil Roth's writings I have noted with special interest his article "Were the Sephardim Hidalgos?" in your August issue. I should like to offer a few observations of my own on the highly controversial matter of Hebrew pronunciation, which Dr. Roth discusses.

I am in disagreement when he maintains that "the general impression that the Sephardi pronunciation is more faithful is apparently erroneous. . . ." No one can categorically state which Jewish group today speaks Hebrew as it was spoken in the homeland more than two millennia ago. In the United States, where the Ashkenazi pronunciation is still maintained by the vast segment of the Jewish population—whose parents arrived mostly from the countries of Eastern Europe—Dr. Roth's statement would be wholeheartedly subscribed to. A group dominant in numbers will not easily concede that the pronunciation of the Sephardi minority in their midst is more faithful than theirs. . . .

This divergence of pronunciation is one of the unhappy by-products of Jewish dispersion; almost nineteen hundred years of exile made it inevitable that their Hebrew pronunciation would be influenced by other languages which Jews spoke. In time, the ability to make certain typically Semitic sounds was lost.

For the following specific reasons, Ashkenazi pronunciation of Hebrew *cannot* be "nearer the ancient Palestinian pronunciation," as Dr. Roth claims: (a) Ashkenazim find it difficult to sound a *Heth* and a *Caph* differently; (b) they pronounce both the *Qof* (Q sound) and the *Kaph* as K; (c) and the three letters *Samekh, Seen,* and *Tau,* are all pronounced by the Ashkenazim as having the S sound. Can all this add up to a "faithful" pronunciation, with basic sounds fallen into desuetude? It goes counter to all the logic and discipline of any language to have several letters pronounced alike. Were they not distinctly different sounds originally? Has not Ashkenazi Hebrew indeed changed from the original?

Further, among Jewry to whom we apply the broad appellation Ashkenazi, we find that there exist variations in Hebrew pronunciation, as in the German, Polish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, etc. I submit that only those Jews who have lived in countries where they have spoken a sister Semitic language in their day-to-day conversation have been able to adhere to a more faithful pronunciation—as among the Babylonians, Yemenites, and Arabic-speaking Spanish Jews.

The father of modern Hebrew, Eliezer ben Yehudah, felt that the Hebrew spoken by the North African Jews approximated the Hebrew of ancient Judea. He preferred the Sephardi pronunciation, and by his ceaseless efforts was instrumental in influencing his generation to adopt it. Why does Dr. Roth consider this "partly an accident, partly a mistake"? Today almost half the population of Israel are Sephardi, and their pronunciation will further influence the emerging pattern of Hebrew pro-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nunciation everywhere in the future. Already many tourists returning from a visit to Israel have changed to the Sephardi way of pronouncing (which I am glad to hear from Dr. Roth is "euphonious"). It may be two generations yet before Sephardi Hebrew prevails wherever Jews reside, but let us hope that the day will come when a uniform Hebrew will help to draw even closer the bonds of spiritual fellowship that unite all sections of the Jewish people.

Incidentally, by sheer coincidence, we have two Sephardi families in Indianapolis, Indiana, who have the family names of Eskenazi and Sarfaty—the very names cited by Dr. Roth as having been appropriated by Sephardim as "typically" their own, in their "annexatory tendency" in whatever land they found themselves.

(Rabbi) ELIAS LEVI

Indianapolis, Indiana

The "How to Read" Controversy

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have just read, with interest and much appreciation, Spencer Brown's article on "Dr. Flesch's Cure for Reading Troubles" in the August issue of COMMENTARY. You and Mr. Brown are to be commended warmly for publication of his "cool look at the panacea."

The problem evoked by Flesch's book is one in which we, as test-builders, have a very special interest. Members of *both* sides in the reading-method controversy look to the test-makers for "proof" of their own particular points of view. This is difficult, for, as Mr. Brown points out, no one so far has found and proved *any* one method of reading instruction to be superior to all others for all children. So we find ourselves constantly asked (by anxious laymen): "Why don't the schools do as Flesch says they should, so our youngsters will learn to read?"—and (by harassed educators): "What can we show or tell to parents who come in with the Flesch book in their hands and fire in their eyes?"

Short of a year-long course in the history and techniques of educational and psychological research, there is blessed little material available for lay readership that will help in answering these questions. Mr. Brown's article is, in my opinion, one of the best and most readable short commentaries on the whole controversy. It could be used by many intelligent readers to attain a more balanced outlook in the matter.

JOHN E. DOBBIN

Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey

Hasidism's Appeal in Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

May I take the liberty of commenting on one point in Rabbi Herbert Weiner's article, "The Liberal Religious Impulse in Israel," published in your issue of August. The author quotes the former minister of education, Mr. Shazar, as saying with regard to "any need for liberal religion in Israel": "When I have a yen for religion, I know two or three nice Hasidic *shtieblach* where I can go and satisfy my soul." A Yemenite woman named Rachel (who in this case seems to represent the author's views) points out that for people like herself, "or for that matter to most Israeli youth," the "sentimental journeys to the *shtiebl* could mean nothing." At this point, the author tells us, Shazar shrugged his shoulders. Now I merely wish to point out a well-known fact which might have escaped the author during his trip to Israel. . . . Many people "like Rachel," i.e. Yemenites, and Sephardim of various denominations and origins, and Israeli-born sabras, *do* come to Hasidic *shtieblach*, not only for "sentimental journeys," but for guidance and spiritual comfort in everyday life. There is one main sect of Hasidism . . . known as "Chabad" or "Lubavitch"—which has a great many adherents . . . not only in Israel, but in the various countries of origin of the "Lubavitcher." These Hasidim maintain a large network of educational activities for children and adults in French Morocco and other North African countries. Literally thousands of North African Jews are staunch "Lubavitcher"—in every way of life.

In Israel, too, hundreds of children—Yemenites, Sephardim, sabras, etc.—go to "Chabad" schools. The adults may hardly be able to pronounce the name of that Byelo-Russian town, but they also have become "Lubavitcher Hasidim." Come to the village of Safariah (near Lydda, on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway) on the 19th of Kislev, when the residents are celebrating the anniversary of the liberation of Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyadi, and you will behold literally thousands of Jews, mostly of the younger generations, from all corners of Israel, of *all* origins, joining in the enthusiastic celebration. Hasidism appeals to the hearts and minds even of people "like Rachel," at least as much as American Liberalism, however "Israelized"—to put it mildly. . . .

URIEL ZIMMER

U.S. and U.N. Correspondent for
Jerusalem Daily *Hakol*
Brooklyn, New York

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS IN REVIEW

The American Jew at Mid-Century

AMERICAN JEWISH YEAR BOOK, 1955. Published by American Jewish Committee and Jewish Publication Society of America. 682 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by DAVID BERNSTEIN

FOR fifty-six years the *American Jewish Year Book* has been a faithful record of Jewish history in the making. To mark the American Jewish Tercentenary its editor, Morris Fine, has this year chosen to present three special historical studies that tell us much about Jews and about America. These articles are more vital than the statistics in the book, for they provide us with the beginnings of a profile of the American Jew at mid-century.

The "ground-tone," to use Nathan Glazer's phrase in his summary of the various surveys of social characteristics of American Jews, is essentially middle-class—respectable, prosperous, sober, ambitious. This ground-tone is very much the same today as it was seventy-five years ago, although between times it has been something quite different.

On the eve of the mass immigration which began in the 1880's, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations made a census of 10,000 Jewish families. It turned out that nearly two-thirds had at least one servant. The largest number of men were merchants of one kind or another. One in twenty was in the professions, and one in eight was a skilled worker of some kind; only one in a hundred admitted to being a peddler.

In the 1950's, having settled down after a couple of generations of change, we are now apparently re-emerging as a 20th-century version of that mid-Victorian middle-class daguerreotype. The change of course, came during the period when Jewish immigrants, pouring in from Eastern Europe, raised the proportion of Jews to the total population from about one in two hundred (1880) to about one in thirty (1917), where it has stayed ever since.

These new settlers herded in the cities, sweltered on hot pavements, froze in cold-water flats, worked in sweatshops, haggled over push-carts, sparkled with ideas, and drove their children to better themselves. For once, history had dealt kindly with Jews, at least with those who came here. Having molded them, through the centuries of ghetto life in Europe, into thrifty, canny, studious people willing to sacrifice the present for the future, it sent them by the millions into a new world where such qualities were in great demand.

So they worked, and they planned for their children. They did not drink. They stayed out of jail. They committed fewer murders and had fewer accidents. More of their babies survived infancy. Their children attended school more regularly and had a higher IQ. It was bound to affect the ground-tone.

At the halfway point, in the 1930's, most of the first-generation immigrants were still manual workers, and most of their children clerks, salesmen, white-collar people. Among women, this was the era of the Jewish secretary, who is now disappearing almost as rapidly as the Jewish laborer. And the penetration into pharmacy, the law, dentistry, and medicine was heavy. At that time, proportionately, more than three times as many Jews as Christians were lawyers or judges in San Francisco, and in Trenton ten times as many were doctors.

What these figures reveal, says Mr. Glazer, is that American Jews seem always to exaggerate the impulses of the nation as a whole. "Thus, if there is a general movement away from manual work, among the Jews it becomes a flight; and when the general birth rate dropped during the Depression, the Jewish birth rate plunged downward."

So today, as before the 1880's, the ground-tone is super-American. In a middle-class country, American Jews are supremely middle class. In an atmosphere where business and the professions are highly respected, most of the younger American Jews are business or professional men. As a group, they are "probably as well-educated and as wealthy as some of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the oldest and longest-established elements in the United States." They still show a marked preference for owning their own businesses—whether junk yard, grocery store, factory, or law firm—rather than managing enterprises owned by others. Clearly there is still the fear, however disguised, that in a large corporate bureaucracy one may be victimized by persons who may happen not to like Jews.

THIS concern is based not on fear of political anti-Semitism but rather on fear of social exclusion—or, more accurately, fear of embarrassment. As Oscar and Mary F. Handlin show in their careful study of the acquisition of political and social rights by the Jews, it is the problem of social barriers during the past seventy-five years that is most relevant today.

The problem really began in the late 19th century. The country was prospering, and the need arose among the newly-rich Protestant families to acquire the trappings of aristocracy. Out of this need came the lavish age of "high society," with its own protocol, customs, residential areas, clubs, resorts, entertainment, all designed to mark off and preserve the status and wealth of those who had "arrived." Ancestry became terribly important, with a blue ribbon for the New Englander of old English stock. Since many in the new aristocracy could not meet the pedigree test, it became easier to try for cohesion through exclusion of the outsider. The most available outsider, after the Catholic, was the stereotyped Jew, whose religion set him apart, whose legendary association with money made him peculiarly repugnant to the very rich, and whose arrival by the millions marked him for easy identification in appearance, speech, manners and habits.

And so, the Handlins point out, the very rapidity with which Jews became members of the middle class made them logical victims of the upper class. "High society, in the 1890's, was no more willing to take a Negro or an Irish Catholic to its bosom; but it was spared the necessity or opportunity for exclusion because few members of these groups attained the means of demanding admission.

These snobberies spread quickly into the everyday lives of too many people, who sought respectability in the places where they lived through such real estate devices as "informal understandings," "gentlemen's agreements," and restrictive covenants. They spread into the joke-lore of the people, for a time, and in a more serious and certainly more stubborn way into employment practices. Discrimination against Jews in many kinds of jobs, in higher education, in some of the professions, in the prestige positions of industry, increased rapidly.

By now a good many of the most virulent symptoms of this disease have disappeared. They were, after all, never compatible with accepted American tradition. They became less necessary as Jews lost their qualities of strangeness and exoticism in the eyes of their neighbors. And the reaction to the ugly extremes of Nazism, the uncomfortable awareness that postwar American behavior was being judged by the rest of the world, and the judicial insistence on the plain meaning of Constitutional guarantees, combined to remove or at least weaken any legalized restrictions.

Beyond all this, there was also the reaction of the Jews themselves. After their initial disappointment and disillusion, they began to develop a peculiarly effective sense of universal responsibility. The lesson they had learned was, as the Handlins put it, "that their own security would be best preserved not by seeking to adjust to laws which were generally iniquitous, but rather by struggling for the general liberties of all Americans. . . . They had learned that there was a unity of interests and ideals among all minorities, and no longer sought security on their own behalf alone, but rather the affirmation of general rights. . . ."

The social barriers began to crumble, not only for Jews but for Negroes and Catholics and other identifiable minorities. A new stereotype of the Jew is arising in America, and we can begin to see its outlines. It reflects the middle-class, respectable, ambitious, moralistic groundtone that now appears to characterize him.

The other side of the coin is that this groundtone, and the social and economic pressures which have created it, have inspired American Jews to create a new image of themselves for themselves. Today the Jew in America is likely to ask a question which would never occur to most Jews in other lands or other ages: "What do I mean when I say that I am a Jew?" The question would have seemed silly to the denizen of a Polish ghetto a hundred years ago; cynical to the desperate Jew behind the barbed wire of a Nazi concentration camp; and unrealistic to the Jew in Israel today. But here it is real because the condition of the Jew in America bears such small semblance to the experience of Jews anywhere else.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OF THE three major essays in the Tercentenary volume of the *Year Book*, Joseph L. Blau's study of "The Spiritual Life of American Jewry" is the most important, and precisely for this reason: "In America alone of all the nations in which Jews have resided *Galuth* has not meant strangerhood but a broadened conception of brotherhood. In America alone the emancipation of the Jews has not been necessary, since in America alone the Jews have been from the outset of national life free and equal citizens of the land in which they live."

During the recent celebrations of the Tercentenary, an occasional protest was raised that the observance lacked "Jewishness," that it did not have enough of a specifically and traditionally Jewish flavor. The complaint may have been justified, but only in the sense that the observance itself was a mirror of American Jews. They are Jews, but they lack "Jewishness."

As Dr. Blau points out, Jewish thinkers in America are for the most part American thinkers speaking to an American audience, and the Jewish background of their thought is thus absorbed into the mainstream of American culture. "In America the lines of communication to the larger American world have been open, and in speaking to this larger world these American Jews have, for the most part, been drawn away from the creation of the American variety of Jewish tradition."

Few indeed have been the voices capable of giving to the mass of American Jews a definition, in their own hearts and minds, of the precise relationship between their "Americanism" and their "Jewishness." The spiritual life which Dr. Blau reviews has not been very creative because the rest of life has been so exciting.

As to the synagogue, the basic symbol of "Jewishness," it has developed into a community center where "the greatest problem of the run-of-the-mill rabbi is to establish some *modus vivendi* with his congregation." It has, in sum, become converted into a servant of a middle-class community. "The typical Jewish congregation houses a wide variety of non-religious and semi-religious activities, as well as serving religious functions." Inevitably there are rabbis who protest. "A community that accepts the philosophy that a gymnasium is as essential to Jewish life as a synagogue, and a Jewish basketball team as conducive to Jewish survival as a Talmud Torah, is on its way to Jewish extinction," said one of them not long ago. But Dr. Blau points out:

"The synagogue-center movement has met a need in the life of the Jewish people of America and has therefore kept on growing. More and more congregations have invested in new buildings and transformed themselves into Jewish centers. Whether the rabbis supported the move or not, they have been compelled to go along, even while they may have been wondering whether, in attempting to do and be all things, the American synagogue has not allowed its major functions to lapse into relative insignificance. Whatever the rabbis may like, the dominant laity likes the synagogue-center. Since the American synagogue is lay-controlled, it becomes what the laity makes of it."

MEANTIME, many American Jews seek their definition of "Jewishness" outside the synagogue altogether. Many today are "good Jews" by virtue of the time and energy they spend on good works. They give or raise money for Jewish causes. They are active members of secular Jewish organizations. Or, seeking larger expressions of their drive to serve, they concern themselves not with Jewish but with general problems: muscular dystrophy, mental health, the Red Cross, civil liberties.

They have discovered a moral equivalent for the traditional ritual of Judaism. Their parents, many of them, had broken away from the ancient faith by the time they reached America, replacing it with a faith in socialism, or labor unionism, or Yiddishism, or any one of a dozen other causes. But when the ground-tone became middle-class, their children found in good works a new way of demonstrating that they were Jewish.

For a time, especially in the late 1940's, Zionism provided an exciting sense of mission, of satisfaction, of unity. But because of the prevailing ground-tone the American Jew tended always to think of Israel as a place for other Jews, not for himself. He gives time, work, money, but he will not give himself. He will go to Israel as a tourist, not as a settler. Inevitably, after the *élan* of the fighting and the excitement of Israeli independence wore off, the unifying appeal of Zionism rapidly began to dwindle. Even in the space of half a dozen years it is possible to note the tremendous change.

And, as a result, there appears to be an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

intensification of the moralistic concept of good works, liberalism, concern for the rights and welfare of others, combined with an increased interest in the synagogue as a communal rather than a spiritual institution. Perhaps, in view of the basic ground-tone, this is what it means to be a Jew in America.

Iconoclastic Gospel

THE NAZARENE GOSPEL RESTORED. By ROBERT GRAVES AND JOSHUA PODRO. Doubleday. 982 pp. $10.00.

Reviewed by GERSON D. COHEN

ROBERT GRAVES's foray into the obscure origins of Christianity may be a masterpiece of imagination and ingenious learning as applied to time-worn stories and traditions, but it is not likely to find favor with a wide public. For Christians, the quasi-humanistic Gospel that Graves has restored—or rather concocted—is rank heresy. Objective scholars will point to his disregard of the usual canons of historical discipline; and the general reader is likely to be perplexed by a New Testament, purged of the miraculous and the polemical, but also of much of its original flavor. In this very readable volume, which amounts in effect to a brilliant footnote to Mr. Graves's novel, *King Jesus,* he remains as little content as before to depend on the findings, interpretations, or insights of others. He seeks his *own* truth, no matter how delicate the subject or sacrosanct the material.

To restore the original Nazarene Gospel or, more accurately, to extricate from the Gospels a historically reliable account of Jesus' life and work has been the avowed purpose of New Testament higher criticism for over a century. From the different literary strata and contradictory accounts that were piously redacted into a unitary and ostensibly consistent history of Jesus and the early Church, scholars have restored a picture not nearly as tendentious or quite so simple as the one given in the Christian *Heilsgeschichte.* No reputable Christian scholar can today accept the Johannine portrait of the Pharisees without considerable qualification; nor can he any longer glibly assign the responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion to blind Jewish hatred. Paul's version of his own work and his accounts of Jesus' message have been the subject of close and skeptical examination, with results that considerably qualify the historical reliability of that apostle's writings.

Nonetheless, Robert Graves and his Jewish associate, Joshua Podro, find that most of New Testament scholarship has still been inhibited by deeply embedded prejudice or, at the very least, by unconscious theological commitments. Whereas the Old Testament has been harrowed and re-harrowed for anachronisms, contradictions, and mistaken transcriptions, there has been a notable tenderness in the treatment of the New on the part of scholars, who seem to go about their work with delicate pincers that patently recoil from excising a verse or questioning the most unlikely representation of fact. Whatever the cause of such inhibitions, they go counter to scholarship and historical truth, and Graves and Podro will have none of them.

THE first of the three main sections of their book briefly surveys the history of the Gospels, as well as of modern New Testament exegesis, and sets forth the factors that make an intelligent reading of the Christian sources difficult. Graves—backed by Podro's Jewish learning—makes his position on the question of Jesus' mission clear from the outset: Jesus was a Jew who came to the Jews with a traditionally Jewish message, regarding himself as the spokesman and fulfillment of the prophetic vision of the Messiah who would herald the end of time. He did not consider himself an apostle to the Gentiles, much less a super-human being. His teachings attracted a large following precisely because they summarized graphically what most Jews believed in and hoped for. As a pious Jew, he was an adherent of Pharisaic doctrine and unquestioningly accepted the Pharisees' reverence for Scripture and for Oral Tradition —in other words, the Law; their belief in the chosenness of Israel, and in the resurrection and the world to come; and he shared their ever ready anticipation of the advent of the Messianic Age and the Day of Judgment.

All this would lead to the conclusion that Christianity after Paul's victory over, and in, it—with the hypostatization of the triune God-man, the rejection of the Law, the contempt for Rabbinism, and the mission to the Gentiles —represents a transformation of the original Gospel and a distortion of Jesus' life and work. Indeed, the authors feel that Paul was an arrogant and occasionally unscrupulous man, and perhaps not even a Jew. This semi-Judaized

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Knowledge has no frontiers, and the great gifts it brings are at the service of country, of civilization, and of mankind...."

Academic Freedom in Our Time

By ROBERT M. MacIVER

A CANDID, persuasive, and eloquent study of the climate of academic freedom today! One of our foremost sociologists and political philosophers, Dr. MacIver decries the new wave of intolerance, of thought control, and of enforced conformity that is pervading our nation and our universities. Naming names and cases, he exposes the narrow thinking, the social prejudices, the economic and political interests that assail academic freedom — in the names of "patriotism," "Americanism," and "anti-communism." He shows how pressures are brought to bear from outside the academic walls (the legislative committees, patriotic organizations, or pseudoeducational associations) and from within (the governing boards, the faculty, or alumni organizations).

Emphasizing the obligations of the educator no less than his rights, Dr. MacIver concludes with some practical measures which, if followed, would greatly reduce the suspicion, ignorance, and irrationality that now so endanger the first of all freedoms — the freedom of the mind. $4.00

The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States

By RICHARD HOFSTADTER and WALTER P. METZGER

THE STORY of academic freedom is not merely the story of academic suppression. The case for academic freedom must also depend on a knowledge of why freedom exists as well as of why it has been limited. Beginning with its foundations in the achievements of the medieval masters, the authors trace its European origins and its evolution in the distinctly American system of education up to the present day. They examine in detail the growth of the old-time college, the impact of science on education before and after Darwin, the influence of the German universities, the role of big business in academic government and finance, the leading cases of violation of academic freedom, and its relation to leading events and movements in American history from the Great Awakening to the Cold War. Timely and provocative, this is an enduring and vital contribution to American thought and civilization. $5.50

At all bookstores

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS
NEW YORK 27, NEW YORK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hellene, they claim, appropriated Jesus' teachings for his own purposes and reworked them beyond recognition.

The second, and major, part of the book is devoted to a detailed and exegetical examination of the sources for our knowledge of Jesus' life and teachings. Each chapter closes with a rendering of that section of "the original Gospel" which the authors feel themselves in the position to "restore" on the basis of their detective work. The third and concluding section gives the text of the "fully restored" Nazarene Gospel, which the authors believe to constitute the original tradition of the Jerusalem Church.

THIS book is suffused with a patent reverence for the Judaism out of which Jesus emerged, and for the institutions which as a loyal Jew he was likely to have held in esteem. Its authors are challengingly iconoclastic and ready to brush aside anything they believe not to be a fact. But as a work of narrative history it is likely to leave even the most sympathetic reader perplexed. For one thing, the life of Jesus, as reconstructed by Graves and Podro, is so radically different from anything that any other scholar has even hinted at as to border on the fanciful pure and simple. And the "restoration" they present is too perfect to be true.

Jesus, we are told, was indeed the product of a virgin birth, but not literally. His annunciation by John the Baptist was followed by a ceremony of symbolic rebirth in which a certain Mary, one of the virgins connected with the Temple at Jerusalem, enacted the role of mother. As the reborn and newly consecrated branch of the seed of David, he went about the countryside preaching his doctrine of love, charity, and repentance. Jesus also cured the lame, the blind, and the deaf and dumb; but "it is likely that their disabilities were the result of nervous shock rather than of disease or physical injury. Cases of 'psychological amaurosis' are not uncommon." Judas betrayed Jesus to the High Priests, but only to get him into protective custody in order to avert any violence that Jesus might have sought to bring on himself as the "Suffering Servant." Jesus was crucified and could rise from the grave because he had merely been in a coma, mistaken for dead by Romans and Jews alike. The Apostles later saw him "risen from the dead," but only to have him take leave of them and go into voluntary exile as a penitent failure.

As an example of the authors' critical methods, we may cite their treatment of the New Testament "law of love." In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is reported to have said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said: 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'; but I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." To begin with, the authors correctly observe, the Biblical *lex talionis* was not literally executed in Pharisaic courts or, for that matter, in any Jewish case on record. More important, however, "Jesus cannot have used the contemptuous expression: 'Ye have heard it said' of a text in the Mosaic law. He will have accepted the Pharisees' liberal interpretation of the *lex talionis* and called attention to another Pentateuchal passage forbidding anyone to harbor vengeful feelings. From this followed a recommendation that the victim of an assault should not insist even on his minimum legal rights, lest he might be motivated by revenge." The Gospel in Graves's version records Jesus' exhortation thus:

"It is written: 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

"Now, if the eye of him that put out his neighbour's eye be likewise put out, or the tooth of him that broke his neighbour's tooth be likewise broken, is the neighbour's loss restored?

"Therefore, he giveth his neighbour satisfaction in silver or works, according to his loss. For the law of mercy is not to be broken that the law of vengeance may be kept.

"Moreover, Solomon counselled you: 'Say not thou: I will recompense evil, I will so do to my neighbour as he hath done to me, but wait on the Lord and He shall save thee.'

"And it is written in the Book of Lamentations: 'The Lord is good unto him that waiteth for Him, and unto him that giveth his cheek to the smiter.'

"Therefore, resist not evil, and if a man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also, if so be that thou mayest be at peace with him.

"And if he smite thee on the right cheek, turn thou also the other to him.

"And if he compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

THIS review can hardly begin to do justice to the painstaking research and copious annotation which have gone into the making and formulation of the theories of Graves and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Podro. But, when all is said and done, their work elicits the respect due a great detective story, perfect in plot, blemishless in its solution —but not quite real or historical. The events and sermons recorded in the "restored Gospel" are all quite possible, but there is simply not the slightest shred of evidence to make the Graves-Podro reconstruction a whit more likely than a host of other possible solutions.

The chief value of *The Nazarene Gospel Restored,* therefore (apart from its literary merit), lies in the work of negative criticism that it performs. At this, the authors are masters; they have laid bare and "exposed" the countless stories and traditions that circulated in the ancient world about Jesus and the early Church. To any but the reader committed by faith, the life of Jesus that is recorded in the New Testament becomes revealed as a series of often conflicting traditions and stories that were redacted and distorted beyond ken by pious disciples. Beyond that, Graves shows here, as before, how much a real literary gift can make of the raw materials furnished the imaginative writer by ancient legend.

"Every Woman for Herself. . . ."

SUSAN B. ANTHONY: HER PERSONAL HISTORY AND HER ERA. By KATHERINE ANTHONY. Doubleday. 521 pp. $6.00.

Reviewed by ARTHUR MANN

IN THE history of the non-conforming American, women have occasionally outnumbered men. Melville and Thoreau were indeed at odds with society, but so were their more numerous female contemporaries: Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, Antoinette Brown, Amelia Bloomer, the Grimké sisters, Lydia Maria Child, Ernestine Rose, Abby Kelley, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and others.

Susan B. Anthony, one of America's foremost dissenting women, was so out of step with America as to be laughed off as a sexless joke. She wore short hair and long pantaloons and agitated in public against slavery. She never married although she espoused, for more than fifty years, equal rights in marriage, as well as in politics, education, and in society at large.

Susan was descended from Puritans who, in the 1630's, fled the England of Charles I and Bishop Laud for eccentric Rhode Island. Twenty years later Abraham Anthony became one of Rhode Island's first converts to Quakerism, a sect that even Roger Williams thought perverse. In the late 18th century Abraham's descendants went west to the Berkshires, where Daniel, Susan's father, was born. He kept alive the family tradition of independence and married outside the faith; although he raised his children as Friends, he became a Unitarian late in life. Disowned by the Battenville, N. Y., Quakers for sanctioning dancing, he in turn disowned the Rochester, N. Y., Quakers for accepting slavery. Alternately a schoolteacher, farmer, mill-owner, storekeeper, and insurance salesman, he moved his family around as often as he changed occupations. Settled in Rochester by the 1840's, Daniel Anthony promptly turned his home into a station for the Underground Railway. One of his Quaker sons fought with John Brown at Osawatomie.

Susan was born on February 15, 1820, in Adams, Massachusetts, and grew up in America's first great period of social reform. She was, as Katherine Anthony's account shows at length, her father's daughter. Educated at a Quaker school in Philadelphia, she was able while still in her teens to earn an independent living as a schoolteacher. Many proposals of marriage came her way, but none from men she favored. At her father's Rochester home she met Rochester's own Frederick Douglass and Boston's Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison. She became an Abolitionist and temperance crusader. In 1851 she was converted to the equal-rights movement by Lucy Stone and Elizabeth Cady Stanton—with Daniel Anthony's blessing.

ACTUALLY, Susan Anthony matured late as a feminist. Until her thirtieth year, she was noted only for a common enough Quaker independence and stubbornness, but she was fond of pretty clothing, wanted to marry, and yearned for stability. For one who was later to be known as "Miss Strongminded," she had a curious sensitivity about a scarcely noticeable cross-eye. At no time as a girl or young woman did she rebel against the harshness of her education or of her mother's life.

What then, apart from the contagion of the times, made her a reformer? According to her biographer, Susan, like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, was in love with the husband of her eldest sister. Both Susan and Mrs. Stanton, after

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

meeting almost by chance, turned their joint energies toward the larger world of public affairs. The author speculates, albeit intelligently and persuasively, about the causal connection between frustrated love and feminist zeal.

Katherine Anthony shows how hard it was for Susan to remain steadfast to her mission; if it were merely an emotional need she was fulfilling, Susan might well have turned to the more normal way of marriage. Even at the age of forty she had a chance to marry, but could not believe, remembering the back-breaking life of her mother, that marriage would leave her free for her work. When Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown, also reformers and spinsters, married the liberal Blackwell brothers, Susan wrote that they had done wrong. Privately, though, she wondered if she was doing right. Behind the grim, combative, and almost arrogant platform manner lay a confused, often unhappy, soul.

The Stanton-Anthony collaboration was a happy, satisfying one, however. In the beginning the more literate and literary Mrs. Stanton wrote Susan's speeches, but with experience on the platform Susan soon was able to speak extemporaneously and well. On the eve of the Civil War, married women in New York finally got the right to make contracts, keep their earnings, and hold equal guardian rights over their children. After the freeing of the slaves, the Stanton-Anthony National Woman Suffrage Association, centered in New York, turned toward winning the vote for their sex. When Susan died in 1905, the grand triumph of the Nineteenth Amendment was well in the making.

REFORM movements are like religious movements in that as they succeed they pass from objecting to the world to joining it. Today's legatees of the equal-rights movement are the well dressed, up-to-date, and reasonably well adjusted suburbanites of the League of Women Voters. Far from being eccentric, they are sober, indeed model, citizens. And with the respectability that members of a church possess and adherents of a sect do not, they blot out the memory of predecessors who were often ridiculed, and sometimes mobbed, as sexless subversives.

Katherine Anthony's thoughtful biography reminds us again that America owes a debt to the rebels who have believed that this nation spells equal rights. Like the abolition of Negro slavery and the extension of full civic rights to Jews and Catholics, the emancipation of women was in the democratic tradition of extending rights to ever widening groups of men and women. Each of these movements found a moral sanction in the Enlightenment's axiom that all human beings, despite differences, share a common humanity and therefore ought to share equally in the rights of mankind. These rights were not those of a social welfare state; the objective was free and fair competition achieved by getting rid of all impediments and barriers. A leading feminist who was also an Abolitionist and an advocate of religious freedom put it this way: "*La carrière ouverte aux talents.* Every man for himself, every woman for herself. . . ."

American women have demanded a lot because America promises a lot. What is the Enlightenment if not a promise of a better future, and what is America if not the promised land? In Europe, the Enlightenment was a class ideology, but in America it underwrote the decision of an entire people to declare itself an independent nation. And although the Fourth of July oration is dead, Americans continue to define their nationality by reference to the principles that gave birth to the country; the United States has been the land of the Permanent Enlightenment.

But the unfulfilled promises of that Enlightenment breed problems and dilemmas, as Gunnar Myrdal has pointed out. The young mother who has been to college, who has had a taste of a career, and who has been brought up to believe that she has rights equal with men, is not easily reconciled to babies, bottles, dishes, and diapers. And the young father who takes his democracy seriously is troubled by the knowledge that the open society is more open for himself than for his college-bred wife. This complication escaped the attention of the leaders of the equal-rights movement, who were, for the most part, well-to-do matrons with servants, or else grandmothers or spinsters.

Mechanization and the Law

THE RESPONSA LITERATURE. By SOLOMON B. FREEHOF. Jewish Publication Society of America. 304 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by NAHUM N. GLATZER

THE Community of Israel, guiding and regulating its existence by the Torah, has been

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A fresh view of American cultural storm centers—a book which cuts through today's "sludge of sentimentality, clichés and myths".

AMONG THE CONTRIBUTORS:

Manny Farber
Milton Klonsky
Bernard Wolfe
Elizabeth Hardwick
Anatole Broyard
Lionel Trilling
Clement Greenberg
Harvey Swados
Robert Warshow
William S. Poster
Harold Rosenberg
Weldon Kees
Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.
William Barrett
and 10 others

The Scene Before You

By CHANDLER BROSSARD

24 lively, controversial and often devastating essays that will set off sound, fury and many an all-night discussion about: science and sex . . . movies, TV and comics . . . Greenwich Village . . . painting, music, politics . . . No academic hacks or high-pressure commentators allowed. This is fearless young America talking.

$4.00 *at all booksellers*

RINEHART & CO., N. Y. 16

throughout its history dedicated to the study of the Law. As the fixed legal codes came to play a minor and auxiliary role in the system of Judaism, greater attention focused on the commentaries and analyses of the rabbis and on their lively exchanges with their correspondents—all this comment and debate represented an enduring dynamic spirit of inquiry. The responsa, or published formal replies given by the various rabbinic authorities to questions of law asked of them, dealt with every kind of concern—liturgical, ethical, ritual, legal. Their recording extends over a period of about fourteen centuries, and embraces all the countries of the Jewish dispersion; Boaz Cohen, in his handbook *Contres ha-Teshubot,* lists 1,250 volumes of responsa literature. Any serious historian of the Jews cannot today overlook this literature, especially in view of the scantiness of primary sources for Jewish history, for a responsum generally tells us something about the conditions surrounding the question—thus the vast body of responsa constitutes a mine of invaluable historical information about the Jewish people.

Dr. Solomon Freehof, in his *The Responsa Literature,* evidently aims at the enlightenment of the general reader. He presents for that reader the chief authors and the main problems of the literature, some of its historical references, and a number of its curious items. Dr. Freehof wishes also, in his presentation, to stimulate an awareness of the "spiritual depth . . . of its influence" and of the "creative part which Jewish Law has played in Jewish life. . . ." It would seem to me, however, that something less solemn and weighty than the creative part played by Halachah, or the spiritual depth of the responsa, is what the reader finds first off in Dr. Freehof's book. Written with great skill and charm, it introduces him to the complexity of Jewish religious life and the stubborn dedication which strove to fit that life into the pattern of the Law. A vivid picture emerges of a community without central authority ready to endure endless hardship in unfriendly surroundings for the sake of an order which ultimately derives from God. But while Dr. Freehof, who is a great student and master of his subject, offers material enough to hold the attention of the serious scholar and reader, the general tenor of his book is a distinctly light one, with an emphasis on the curious and the amusing.

PERHAPS the most interesting problem suggested by the book is that of the change in perspective of the Jewish law as such, with its

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

own function of religious rationalization, in coming to grips with the rationalization and secularization of life brought about by the machine age. Jewish civilization attained its classical pattern in a largely non-technical period. That pattern, in which secular pursuits had attained a level of sacredness, and the holy had penetrated into the realm of the profane, and where a highly personal attitude to the functions of the individual and the community was predominant, appeared challenged by the new technological inventions. Dr. Freehof cites pertinent examples. The invention of printing helped spread knowledge and secure more accurate texts; but could a printed Torah be considered sacred and suitable for worship? The absence of the conscious intent of holiness that is required for the writing of the divine name makes the printing press objectionable. As for electricity: is it sacred enough to be used ritually for the Sabbath, the Holy Days, Chanukah? Does a Jew fulfill his duty of "listening to the voice of the shofar" on the New Year if he hears the shofar blown over the radio in his living room? Is it not necessary to have that knowledge of the person who recites the prayer and performs the shofar ritual in one's behalf that goes with *seeing* him? (But television is invented and one can see him.) Again, can the matzah be produced by machine? The law requires that those who produce the matzah should be mature and intelligent persons, whereas the machine "has not even the intelligence of a child." The personal effort of a human being that is presupposed by the law is replaced by a neutral machine "that works automatically."

Yet we see that there is no longer any question as to whether or not the machine can be justified by means of a reinterpretation of the law. Many responsa authors frankly admit that the legal apparatus of Judaism can go a long way in making machines permissible; the machine can even be helpful in the observance of the Law (witness the automatic Sabbath clock!). Nevertheless, we glimpse behind the precariousness, and even occasional clumsiness, of the rabbinic approach to technological changes, a deep-seated negative attitude to the whole realm of the machine. For the chief issue is not a legal but a religious one, in a more specific sense. The aim of Judaism has been to sanctify all aspects of life; mechanization leads, directly or indirectly, to the secularizing of life. Thus what on the surface appears to be merely incongruous and cumbersome as procedure is something more serious; it is the dilemma created by the attempt to solve a religious problem by legal means. The logical and rational motivation of Jewish law had successfully counteracted eruptions of apocalyptics, mysticism, and extreme messianism; but it proved inadequate when the situation called for a return to a consideration of basic principles of religious philosophy and a religious outlook on life. This is the dilemma which lies behind much of the spiritual confusion in post-Emancipation Judaism, and Dr. Freehof would have won the special gratitude of at least some of his readers had he chosen to enter into a consideration of this dilemma.

Middle Way as Metaphysics

THE DIGNITY OF MAN. By RUSSELL W. DAVENPORT. Harper. 338 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by GERALD WEALES

WHEN Russell W. Davenport died last year, he left unfinished the book that has now been published under the title *The Dignity of Man.* John Knox Jessup, in a biographical introduction, says that Davenport had taken the volume through at least two complete rewritings, "in order to get the epistemological problem nearer its center." The sad thing about the book as it now appears, edited by John Davenport and Duncan Norton-Taylor from the manuscripts, is that there is really nothing at the center. Nothing, that is, except Davenport's vague though understandable faith in man; his equally vague, and equally understandable, suspicion that man does not deserve that faith; and his confusion when faced with these contradictory feelings. During World War II he wrote *My Country,* a rhetorical love song to the United States which pegged all allegiance on the level of Ma's apple pie, an improbability that could only be understood and forgiven at the height of a war. In the years that followed, Davenport came to realize that naive patriotism was not going to be a sufficient weapon to use against the expanding Communist part of the world. He began to think that a definition might do it, and in *U.S.A. The Permanent Revolution,* he and the editors of *Fortune* tried to find the meaning of this country. By the time he was well into the present volume, he had decided that Russia could not be opposed with any hope of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

final success unless a definition of man or an agreement to search for one could be found. *The Dignity of Man* attempts to start us on that search.

Along with a kind of brashness, a good-natured assurance that all knowledge is every man's province, Davenport brings with him from the halls of Henry Luce, where at various times he edited *Fortune,* wrote the *Life* editorial page, and even, in its infancy, worked for *Time,* a belief that even the most complicated problem can be reduced to simple terms and that out of the reduction will come clarity. It is standard practice for any writer or organization whose job is the watering down of difficult material for widespread consumption to ease the problem by employing a series of labels, if possible personifications, that can be set in opposition. Davenport admits to such over-simplification, but he is willing to risk it. He opposes an Idea of Dialectical Man to an Idea of Industrial Man, abstractions that are supposed to represent the believer in Communism on the one hand, and on the other, the product of Western industrialization. Since the latter has been formed by naturalism, pragmatism, and faith in science and the perfectability of man, he says, it is not really in opposition to the former; sharing so much that has gone into Communism, it can offer no real concept of freedom or human dignity. To replace it, an Idea of Man must be discovered. To create these capitalized philosophical puppets, Davenport has had to pare down both camps to the ideas that form them; he has decided that, before we can find out what man is, we first have to turn him into concepts.

DAVENPORT'S first step along the way to a new truth about man is to discard the language of professional philosophy, a move that might be applauded on the ground that the dumping of any jargon is a step toward understanding, except that the somewhat mystic terminology he substitutes is too vague to be of any value. He talks of an outwardness and an inwardness (man's relationship to things and to himself) and of links, for which he suggests the phrase "psychic," that connect the two. By looking within, through a kind of revelation which is also a kind of thinking, we come to realize that behind the "I" of each of us there "is a being—a truly spiritual being—whose reality is intimately linked with that of other men and women." Freedom, it develops, is a process, a

FIRST AID FOR PROGRAM CHAIRMEN

COMMENTARY has reprints of the following articles for use in discussion groups, organization programming and classrooms:

NEW

Dr. Flesch's Cure for Reading Troubles
by Spencer Brown 15¢ each

North Africa's Dilemma for American Jewry
by Hal Lehrman 15¢ each

The Attack on Our Libraries
by James Rorty 15¢ each

The Libraries in a Time of Tension
by James Rorty 15¢ each

Unions and the Public Interest
by A. H. Raskin 10¢ each

A Beacon-Commentary Study
THE NEW RED ANTI-SEMITISM
A Symposium
Edited by Elliot E. Cohen, 58 Pages
Price 75¢

Do Silent Witnesses Defend Civil Liberties?
by Alan F. Westin 15¢ each

Stalin Follows in Hitler's Footsteps
by Peter Meyer 20¢ each

Communism, Democracy and the Churches
by Will Herberg 10¢ each

The Sectarian Conflict over Church and State
by Will Herberg 10¢ each

What to Do About "Dangerous" Textbooks
by Edward N. Saveth 10¢ each

Reprint Department
COMMENTARY
34 West 33rd Street
New York 1, New York

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

searching for that truth, a working out of relationships.

It is no real disservice to reduce Davenport's major points (which apparently come from Rudolf Steiner) to these bare sentences, for the ideas are as tentative, as imperfectly defined, as uncertain in his own explanation of them. He is contradictory in that he sympathizes with what he calls the philosophical pessimists (anyone who believes that there is essential evil in man) and yet is admittedly optimistic in his belief that there is "a fundamental respect and yearning for truth that dwells in every human heart," and in his assurance that the inner "I" is plural. This contradiction is just one of a series of opposites—inwardness and outwardness, perfectability and its absence, individuality and social orientation—which he treats by walking the Middle Way. It is not surprising that Davenport, who helped originate that political-economic Middle Way between New Deal welfare and free private enterprise by which the Eisenhower administration signified its slightly befuddled acceptance of the essentials of Rooseveltian policy, should have tried to adapt the same kind of compromise as a philosophy, even a metaphysic.

Often, when Davenport is most concrete, he is perceptive. He is able to put his finger on many of the philosophic problems confronting the Western world today, and he does not join the new conservatives in a wholesale retreat to Burke and Metternich. Nor does his distrust of science's ability to make a better world lead him to dismiss science as cavalierly and pompously as some others. Still, he has little to offer except his sincerity. When he is not confused, he is ordinarily commonplace. In commenting on the demand for a "philosophy" or a "spiritual revival" which has been so insistent since the last war, he says in his Introduction to *U.S.A. The Permanent Revolution,* "Everyone is demanding to hear the truth. But who is shedding the light of truth?" *The Dignity of Man* pretends to be no more than a first signpost along the way to that truth, but even in so humble a capacity it fails because Davenport is like the comic character in Western movies who points in both directions and says, "He went thataway." It is almost possible to hear him crying out that man has no dignity, that the last fifty years of history prove the absence of such a quality, but he knows that there is a dignity of man, he senses it, he sometimes sees it. Most of us, like Davenport, act as if both the dignity and the absence of it were true, for it is possible to live a paradox. In fact, it is almost impossible to live any way other than paradoxically. Yet a paradox, by definition, is almost impossible to work into a philosophical system. Anyhow Davenport cannot do it.

The present volume was to be only the first of a series, of which one was to deal with practical aspects of American policy. We are forced, however, to judge Davenport's position on the basis of the published work alone. His concern with a final, certain, holdable belief is one that can be respected by anyone who wonders what the United States will have to face beyond the day-to-day crises in Europe and Asia. Still, a paradox makes a bad slogan to chalk on a wall. Let the search for a final definition of man's dignity go on, of course, but for the moment, sadly, our confusion may be all that we have to hold on to. The Western concept of freedom and dignity, even if it is based on out-moded terminology, is one of our strongest weapons. Even Davenport would not want us to junk our old-model dignity while the new model is still on the philosophical drafting boards.

Broadway "Meshuggene"

THE LATE RISERS. By BERNARD WOLFE. Random House. 303 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by ISAAC ROSENFELD

THE LATE RISERS is all about Broadway—show girls, call girls, con men, publicity agents, actors, actresses, marijuana salesmen and consumers, columnists, their ghosts, and other *meshuggene.* There is also a dying professor who makes his home in Greenwich Village (Mr. Wolfe does not say professor of what, but it has something to do with Marxism, voodoo, and linguistics—he probably taught at the New School). These characters are linked together in a fantastic plot that operates for seventeen and one-half hours of a single day, at the end of which their masks are lifted, and true natures established—e.g., Betsy Bugbee, who personifies innocence, turns out to be a whore, and Frana Sherwood, the most notorious call girl in town, a virgin, with a medical certificate to prove it—and a high percentage of the *dramatis*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This *I Believe*

By John Herman Randall Jr.*

"THE essence of the American spirit is to be cosmopolitan, to be free from the provincialism, the parochialism, and the prejudices of European lands, with their tight unified national traditions bred of a millennium of competition in warfare. That spirit is found at its best in our metropolitan cities, like San Francisco, Chicago, or New York. Our fellow countrymen often say that such cities are not like the rest of America; they sometimes insist that Chicago or New York is not truly "American" at all. On the contrary, I am profoundly convinced that our great cosmopolitan cities are the most "American" of all our many communities. They have learned to understand best just what America really means.

"For America is not a nation, but a continent—a continent in process of growing into a community. It is not a "nation": it is not bound together by those ties which European nations cherish—a common origin, a common "stock," common traditions, a common religion. America, thank God, is united by no common and shared faith, to make it intolerant of other faiths and loyalties, as faith so often does. America has always been a welter of differing faiths, in which each has had to learn first to let the others alone, then to respect them, and eventually to cooperate with them. Hence for Americans a man's "faith" has not been a "public" but a "private matter"—an attitude quite incomprehensible to Europeans, for whom "faith" has normally served as a club to enforce public uniformity.

"America is united in no common tradition—save that of living and working together. America faces forward to a shared task, not backward to shared memories. It is willing to learn—and what is still harder, to forget, to scrap prejudices, and to experiment with what is new. The United States is bound together not, like European nationalities, by a common past, but by a common future—by common interests, common enterprises, and common methods of getting along with each other. It is unified, not in a common religion, which would inevitably look to what has already been, but in a common education, which looks to what is yet to be."

Published as a public service by

THE WELCH GRAPE JUICE COMPANY, INC.

J. M. Kaplan, President

*"The Spirit of American Philosophy" by John Herman Randall, Jr.
From Wellsprings of the American Spirit, *edited by F. Ernest Johnson*
Published by the Institute for Religious and Social Studies
Distributed by Harper and Brothers

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

personae is led off to jail. Whirled about in this tricky rigamarole are a few good laughs, such as the elaborate hoax on Biff Jordan, the Hollywood cowboy star, in which half of New York, including the *Times* sign, gets involved, a compendium of bop talk, and a theme of rather surprising weight, considering the general tone and level of this novel.

The serious theme is carried by Movement, a Negro marijuana salesman, whose life turns on the problem of authenticity, developed here in a series of paradoxes. Like most of his companions, white and Negro, Movement imitates the Negro who, in rebellion against the original stereotype imposed on the Negro by whites, imitates the Negro jazz musician. He is "cool," faceless, expressionless, totally without affect and to all outward appearances mindless—but is a pressure-cooker of rage and resentment within. His life, like his vocabulary, grows out of a set of metaphors based on insanity, violence, and death: *crazy, blow-top, cool, gone,* etc. Movement suffers from hypertension and lives on a diet of pills, and his thought—supplied largely by Melville's *Confidence Man* and Wyndham Lewis' *America and Cosmic Man*—is constantly tortured by the search, known in advance to be futile, for a real identity, an authentic self. This, like everyone else in his world, he is totally devoid of: his self is a function of a consciousness that has no center, that keeps turning back upon itself to find a void. All he can do is assume a number of poses or roles assigned by the people round him: Negroes who, like himself, play the part of the "cool" Negro, as well as those who still play the folksy, drawling role; whites who imitate both varieties of Negro, and white women who seek in him, and oblige him to play, the primitive buck, which also doesn't exist. Since Movement is a man in quest of himself to the exclusion of all roles—his self-doubt, however, suggests that this is but another role—his encounters with the world, particularly with white women, infuriate him and bring him closer and closer to the point of explosion. At the close of the book, he has submitted to a lobotomy and wound up in a Hollywood movie, cast as a young Negro doctor. The part had originally been given to a white actor, but his Southern accent and kinky hair made him seem too Negroid; Movement puts on blackface and looks like a white man made up to look like a Negro.

In spite of the exigencies of an improbable plot, Mr. Wolfe has caught something in Movement which is "authentic" as far as it goes. Movement's pre-occupations are highly metaphysical, but his role may be studied in millions of interpretations among the hipsters of Broadway, the Village, San Francisco, Chicago's South Side, or wherever the jazz musician is culture hero.

Much of the same paradox of authenticity and inauthenticity is exhibited in the structure of this novel; it is made up to resemble Existentialist fiction (see the novels of Sartre and his articles and reflections on American life), which fiction, in turn, wears a make-up job derived, in good part, from the equivalent of the same Broadway kit.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

David Bernstein was executive director of the National Tercentenary Committee.

Rabbi Gerson D. Cohen succeeded the late Alexander Marx as Librarian of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Arthur Mann, author of *Yankee Reformers in the Urban Age,* is at work on a book about religion and democracy in America.

Nahum N. Glatzer teaches Jewish history at Brandeis University.

Gerald Weales has written for the *Atlantic, Hudson Review,* and the *American Scholar.*

Isaac Rosenfeld, whose fiction and criticism appear often in the literary reviews, teaches in the humanities at the University of Chicago.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This year for Hanukkah
Give the Canadian Whisky that's

IN HIGHEST FAVOR AMONG IMPORTED WHISKIES

In HONOR of the Occasion
Give the Gift that HONORS

Seagram's

VO

CANADIAN WHISKY—A BLEND... OF RARE SELECTED WHISKIES
THIS WHISKY IS SIX YEARS OLD • 86.8 PROOF • SEAGRAM-DISTILLERS COMPANY, NEW YORK, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Amoco's Finest Motor Oil

AN ALL-WEATHER LUBRICANT SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR HIGH-COMPRESSION ENGINES

SUPER PERMALUBE saves engines—less wear, scuffing or scoring. Gives super-protection against hydraulic valve-lifter sticking, chemical attack on bearings, piston varnish, piston ring sticking, rusting.

SUPER PERMALUBE saves batteries—reduces starting strain in cold weather.

SUPER PERMALUBE saves costly repair bills—protects against combustion chamber carbon, bearing corrosion, and engine wear.

SUPER PERMALUBE saves oil—versatile viscosity maintains efficient lubrication—less oil consumed.

SUPER PERMALUBE saves gasoline—up to 34.4 extra gas miles per tankful, engines stay clean, run better, last longer.

SUPER PERMALUBE—for maximum engine protection in extreme weather, cold or hot.

IT CLEANS AS IT LUBRICATES

AMOCO®

Hear "Edward R. Murrow and the News," 7:45 P.M., Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, CBS-Radio Network
See Edward R. Murrow in "Person to Person," 10:30 P.M., Fridays, CBS-TV Network

AMERICAN OIL COMPANY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED